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Inside Out

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Inside Out

Susi Jenkins
In partial fulfillment of
The Bachelor of Arts Degree in Dance
Loyola Marymount University
May 6, 2006

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Inside Out



Because both personal experience and artistic restraint are necessary to expression, it is clear that, no matter what the source of a dancer's initial it is the richness of experience and the sensitivity of the selecting personality which control and color are the material, and which make of movement—a dancer.

Margaret H'Doubler

I was once told to never settle for the title of ‘dancer’ but to always reach for the status of ‘performer’. It was explained to me that a performer is more emotionally engaged with the movement, themselves, and the audience; so as to reveal a deeper message. Where as a dancer presents movement, they have only achieved technique and nothing more. At the time I thought I understood this concept but it wasn’t until this year that I fully grasped the idea of what ‘performing’ is. I had the advantage of performing in works choreographed by Holly Johnston and Karen McDonald. It was through their guidance that I was able to understand what past choreographers and mentors had been trying to tell me. Becoming more emotionally engaged as a performer I was able to give more of myself, not only to the audience and the dancers I was on stage with but also to my cast in my choreographic work. I have become intrigued with the idea of performance and have spent the last couple months trying to figure out if there is a general thesis on the basis of performance. There are many different interpretations on what performance means, what a performer should be, how performance should be taught along with many other aspects. I have challenged myself to discover what performance signifies to me by researching what the scholars and my choreographers have to say...

What Does Performance Mean?

I started this whole journey by asking the question: what is performance? There are many different aspects to what performance can hold and various artists interpret performance differently. I have discovered that when you ask someone what performance means, the most common response is a description of his or her feelings when performing. Not very many people gave an actual definition of the meaning of performance. However, I think by describing their personal feelings they have in all reality described the true essence of what performance is. It should be the embodiment of a feeling that can transform yourself and/or an audience.

Performing allows you to give yourself to the meaning of the moment and the movement while living in a magical world of accoutrements. The costumes, makeup, sets, and lights augment what you have so painstakingly learned. Your steps are no longer textbook dry, but transcend to character and emotion. There is no finer feeling, nor no better gift to the audience (Paul 47).

Performing is a wonderful feeling if you allow yourself to go to that place. Many dancers restrict themselves from totally letting go either with their own personal insecurities or they are too concerned with their technique: "Dancers who refuse to be vulnerable and latch onto technique have, in my opinion, chosen the wrong profession. Technical training that excludes artistic development or separates technique from art really has nothing to do with dance as an art form"

(Franklin 213). Artists in general are very insecure but in order to perform we have to overcome our insecurities and our worries about technique and dive into the transformation of the artist.

Performance is using knowledge as an illustration of a deeper feeling rather than withholding and merely possessing that emotion and intellect. According to Holly Johnston, “performance is an opportunity to exchange that which is personal to me with an audience. To be able to have what is a magical exchange between the audience and my personal expression or the expression of the work and the chemistry of the moment in between”. Once again, performance proves to be a feeling. It is an overwhelming sensation for the performer and it becomes a reward for an audience to witness:

Experience of the arts may allow us to experience finer shades of feeling; and it may do so because it may allow the refining of the concepts under which those feelings are experienced and under which the experiences are characterized. Moreover, these concepts must be mobilized in our experience (McFee 275).

What makes a good performer?

How do you objectively look at an artist and decide whether or not they are meeting their full potential as a performer? I find that it is the artist's responsibility to understand how involved they are with in the work. They need to be emotionally invested and dig deeper with in themselves to have clarity of movement and honesty on stage. For the longest time I was a surface performer and did not understand what deeply rooted message or emotion I should be feeling or transcending. It was not until my senior year that I was able to understand and fall in love on stage. I was involved with the movement causing me to become lost in a trance. At the end of the performance I could not comprehend the realities of what I had just experienced.

Dance performance is more than hitting a line and pointing your feet. I had become too wrapped up with technique that my performance ability was suffering. After working with Karen McDonald in her piece, *Shift*, I was able to fuse both technique and performance into one. It was a challenge to wed them together but I needed to do so in order to be honest with the movement. If the intention were to feel a release and a transition into a more of a peaceful place with oneself, then it would not make sense if my movement resembled that of a struggle. I had to be confident with the movement in my body so I could create the type of energy that the intention required. Tommy Tune states:

I went onstage so early. I don't think you can get enough experience on a stage. Yes, we're going for some kind of technical

perfection in the room, but there's an experience that you get with performing that separates you from those who are simply technically trained. They are fabulous, but they can blend into the background. Like those people you see in class who are fabulous at the barre with their legs up to their ears, but when they come out onto the floor at an audition they don't have any sense of the choreographer's style or what he was trying to express. They give the perfect "thing" but they don't get the job. You need a healthy balance of both. The more you can perform wherever, the more experience you gain. Just give me a stage. I'll play anywhere. I would do it then, and I'll do it now. You need to express your soul, to have that physical dialogue with the audience. And that improves with repetition. (Paul 47)

There are many different exercises that can help the artist grow to become a stronger and more genuine performer. One exercise that my acting class has taught me was to give my character a history. I needed a residence, family, friends, a secret, etc. This method also works for the dancer. Every work should have some purpose that the dancer can draw upon to create a time line for them; words, images, stories are all tools that can be used.

When you dance, you should have a history. You are no just a machine sending sugar through its muscles. You are a personality, an individual with a background, surrounded by the aura of the many great events in which you have participated. Try to expand your background. Rather than becoming inflated or self-righteous, this exercise should add richness and depth (Franklin 223).

In Karen McDonald's work she asked us to come up with a story that we could live through out the dance. Our purpose was to go on an emotional journey and

discover a new awakening within ourselves. It was a struggle for me at first to concentrate on emoting without letting my technique suffer. Karen would constantly push me through out rehearsal to go deeper into the movement. She wanted my legs higher, my balances sustained longer, and more pirouettes. I had to figure out how to relate my inner dialogue with my technique. I could not make the work look exhausting and I had to be an honest performer. Our character's needed a change and by the end of the work we should have come to terms with what it was that we had to do to be happy. We needed to discover whom we were in order to transition into a place of peace.

What is your basic message, your heartfelt purpose or identity? You needn't express it in words, as long as you have a clear and strong feeling or a physical sense. Many dancers have a key performance image that creates their specific personality, that gives them their grandeur onstage. Isadora Duncan wrote: "when I have danced I have tried always to be the Chorus; I have been the chorus of young girls hailing the return of the fleet; I have been the chorus dancing the Pyrrhic Dance, of the Bacchic; I have never once danced a solo". One of Cathy Ward's key performance images is 'coming from nothing into clarity, coming from a dream to real, coming from hardness to softest expandable infinity, remembering what is eternal and wearing it like a glove of nakedness, trembling with poetry and strength, so close it could be your own breath' (Franklin 226).

What makes a good performer is confidence in movement and a genuine expression of self. A performer needs to be relaxed on stage and feel comfortable in the space. They need to be aware, assertive, and artistic in their choices. What

makes a good performer is the individual realizing who they are and why they move. What is their purpose for existing as a dancer?

Choreographer's Intention

Performance has the opportunity to reveal itself but only once a choreographer decides to take the challenge to choreograph. The responsibility of the dancer is to convey the message the choreographer is trying to speak through movement.

William Blake's views are that of similarity:

What dancers create is a dance; and a dance is an apparition of active powers, a dynamic image. Everything a dancer actually does serves to create what we really see; but what we really see is a virtual entity. The physical realities are given; place, gravity, body, muscular strength, muscular control and secondary assets such as light, sound or things. All these are actual. But in the dance, they disappear; the more perfect the dance, the less we see the actualities. (Ellefeldt 190)

Dance is a unique type of body language. A nonverbal art form where there are no vociferous messages in its language of movement, yet it still has the opportunity to develop a literal concept or story. "The artistic act of the performed dance is a conscious resolution of the choreographer's comment on his world, through the craft and projection of sensitive dancers. Until performed the dance does not exist, and after the performance it remains only as clues in the choreographer's head" (Ellefeldt 187).

There are many questions choreographers have to ask themselves before they can create a dance: "What is your relationship to the audience? Are you trying to involve them? Are they outside spectators, separated from your

activities, looking in on an event taking place within a large box? Onstage one is usually surrounded by walls on three sides and emptiness in front.”

(Franklin 222). When I choreographed I did not ask myself these questions and the performance of my dancers became lost. It was in the middle of the work when I realized I needed to figure out exactly the relationship my dancers had with each other and with the audience. In Karen McDonald’s rehearsals she would constantly explain how we needed to ‘bring it out to the audience’. She went through out the piece and found moments of when she wanted our characters to look out into the audience. Karen explained how she wanted our performance to bring the audience on an emotional journey. We needed to involve them so they could feel the same shift and transition that our characters would feel by the end of the work. Her intention was for each cast member to realize the shift that they needed to take as individuals and as artists to be a better human being

Through out my process I was constantly asked if the work that I was creating was going to be entertaining for the audience. I was a little taken a back. The work was something sacred for me because it represented my aesthetic. I explained that the movement I create was pleasing to me and it was entertaining for me. If the audience enjoys it then that is just an extra bonus. However, in describing his own process Mark Morris states: “We are performing artists, so of course it is for other people to watch...” (Roseman 67). Where as Karen would explain to her cast that the idea of the work is not anything she can give us. It needs to be a shift that we find with in ourselves. She explains, “I want to do a work that the people involved can use. If you project emotionally to the audience

they can offer you something in return to help you move on". The role of a choreographer is to bring out the identity of the performer. To guide their process in revealing their true being. The performance is left up to the dancer but the choreographer can help the journey in finding expression.

have to be in a certain zone, dancers should be well focused in order to have a positive performance. Dancers need to learn how to relax and let their bones and muscles take over. By allowing their body to just move they are surrendering their mind and becoming a performer.

Too often the dancer lets their mind take over revealing their insecurities. Dancing from this place is dangerous because the performance begins to rest in fear, too self-conscious of what others would think. Dancing from a place of fear performance quality can never improve because the dancer is withdrawn from the movement and cannot connect emotionally to the work.

I had often been told that I needed to discover whom I was in order to perform. I thought I always knew who I was but have discovered that it is a process of self-discovery both emotionally and physically. I had to figure out why I walked into a dance studio every day and what about this art was causing me to move and feel alive. Alonzo King explains it eloquently when asked how he coaches his dancers to perform:

You can point to paintings, books, and locations, all of which are great and useful, but the true search is within. Things can only be known personally. Clarity or light helps us all. The illumination from great dancing can change lives. The key thing is understanding. The movement has to be realized. To give language power, the person speaking must know full what they are talking about. You may hear two different speakers saying the exact same thing, using the exact same words, and one will strike you motionless and the other will be hardly noticed and soon forgotten. It is because the former has experienced and fully realized what they are saying, and the latter is just reciting words with proper

elocution and speaking techniques but without understanding. Understanding usually comes after a state of heightened awareness. That awareness always begins with the self (Roseman 128).

You can try and teach a dancer how to perform but the overall conclusion would be to help them discover who they are. If they can release all inhibitions then they will find clarity in the performance and in their life.

The Performer vs. the Human Being

I have read many stories about depression and anxiety with in artists because there identity becomes lost when trying to perform. So many different characters are living inside the individual it is hard to separate the many various personalities that an entertainer possess'. It is easy to become lost. Artists are vulnerable creatures that become so locked in to giving to others (i.e. choreographer, audience, cast members, friends, etc.) they forget to give to themselves. They forget that all the personalities living with in them need to grow and materialize. The artist needs to realize who is in control of the mind and then let the rest follow.

It isn't enough that a performer recognizes that the role he is playing on the stage can influence his own way of living. He must accept the fact that there are definite and separate people living in his body, and that they each must grow with their own values and that often these values contradict each other. Outsiders can get very confused by theses contradictions unless they are made to understand whose voice they are listening to that moment.

(Louise 73)

In an interview with Catherine Turocy, artistic director and cofounder of the New York Baroque Dance Company, she explains how easy it is to lose your identity. "I was the performer who was somewhere between having just interpreted a role and looking for myself. It was such a strong feeling of being lost and feeling really sad. When I took my mask off, it was a very vulnerable state to

be in. It shocked me into the fact that you have to pay attention to these transitions” (Roseman 104). Everything created by the artist represents whom the artist is. When I choreographed *Ingrained*, the response I received after my peers watched the performance was that I must have a lot of built up aggression. I was surprised by this remark and could not see how my dance reflected me as an individual. My work was an experiment of my aesthetic and nothing more. However, I have learned that artists give a part of themselves when they create. In developing my characters I realized that each one represented me at some point in my life. It may not be clear to the audience but once I realized who I was in comparison to my characters I was able to dive deeper into the intentions behind their movements.

Many dancers are unaware of how to transition from character to human being. Artist’s lead such complicated lives that we are constantly on the go. There is no time to actively be aware of what is happening mentally and emotionally. It needs to become a responsibility of the dancer to have a self-check in and evaluation. By listening to yourself you will be more in tune with your body and emotions to live a more fulfilling life.

I once believed that I did not have to be honest in any emotions and could ‘act’ out what I was supposed to do. This particular method did not work and I found myself in a slump begging for improvement. I have since discovered that no performance is real unless it is from a deep place with in. You have to separate yourself from the character you are portraying but realize that a part of you is still that character. “...its many Me’s that make up *the Me*” (Louise 72).

Performer becomes Creator

Performance plays an extremely different role from performer to creator. I gave myself a big challenge this year when I decided to choreograph. I have never choreographed a modern dance before for other people. I have always experimented with movement on my own body, especially in Fundamentals of Composition and Styles and Forms. There I was given the freedom to explore my aesthetic and learn my mistakes. Choreographing for something other than class was a testament to myself that I could meet the expectations of my peers and myself.

I was worried first and foremost that my choreography was not going to present itself the way I wanted on the two men that I had chose for my piece. Being a female I found that my movement was very feminine and I wasn't sure if I could give them movement composition that would prove successful for them as men and not make them look feminine. This was my primary worry until I actually started and realized that my choreography would carry some weight no matter who was performing because my movement is different on every individual, which was inspiring and helped me create a movement vocabulary on that particular body.

The next problem that I realized I had to do was to give my dancers an intention. My work was based very much on gender roles so the movement that I created needed to identify them as individuals. They each had a character that I was trying to portray through movement. My intention was to show how one

person affects somebody causing a chain reaction, thus affecting many people. I was able to give good definitions on two out of the three characters but I was having problems describing the last character. My purpose for him kept changing and I was driving myself crazy trying to figure out who he was in this work. My dance was becoming more of a love triangle rather than what I originally intended it to be. Frustration was hovering over me and I was at a loss of where to go. I enjoyed all the movement that I had created but as far as the performance level was considered I was failing miserably to my cast. I was not giving them what they needed to perform and I knew they were having problems connecting to their characters because I had not connected to the characters. Only the surface had been scraped on there identity in my work and the choreography was suffering because there was no emotional connection.

It was not until I saw my dance at the American College Dance Festival that I realized I had a lot of work to do. The characters interacting with each other were strong but the solo work needed a lot of developing. They weren't anybody by themselves. I started just writing about myself and learned that I was each one of my characters. Images and words just started pouring out of me and I knew immediately how to help my cast. At my next rehearsal I gave my dancers images that they could think about to describe their distinctiveness. Using these images we went through each part of the dance and outlined their purpose for moving together and for taking the space. I wanted my cast to really think about why they were moving, what there motivation was for moving. Immediately I saw the change in there dancing because they understood whom they were

supposed to portray. They were finding themselves through my work and watching them was helping me to understand where I needed to go and what I needed to develop. When I came up with my intention statement I shared it with my cast and an epiphany came over one of my dancers for he suddenly understood everything that I had been trying to convey. I used a quote from Miguel Ruiz where he discusses the mind and body connection and how the mind can eventually take over the body.

I was very pleased to see my work on the stage. The lighting and costumes helped intensify my movement to another extreme that I had not expected. The lighting assisted the choreography in developing the story. My work had a lot of bound energy and the dynamic lighting change at the beginning of the piece, set up the entire dance. Besides the quick lighting change to red my lighting designer created a slow transition from one color to the next through out my work so you wouldn't pay all that much attention to lights but to the dancers. The lighting went through a soft process and then suddenly you would realize that it was no longer the color you thought it was. I enjoyed this because it allowed my movement and my dancers to create the work and the lighting was merely an added detail.

When I was told that I needed to come up with an alternate plan, because one of my dancers was injured, I drew an immediate blank. I had no idea what I was going to do. I was emotionally connected to the dance in a different way than my dancers, so I did not want to put myself into the work. When a replacement was found, I was slightly nervous as to what to do because this dancer was very

different from the previous one. I had made movement phrases based on this dancer and did not know how it would look on this new body. This new cast member became my hero. Not only did he learn my dance in the shortest amount of time but also I was immediately drawn to watching him on stage because he was emotionally connected to the performance. He added new elements that I was not expecting and I was overjoyed with how he fit into my work. Performing is very difficult to achieve when you are uncomfortable in the work. From the first rehearsal I had with him he offered me a part of himself because he jumped into the character he thought he was supposed to be. I would have loved to see how far he could have come if I was able to work with him longer. He would have been unstoppable because even though he was hesitant with some of the movement vocabulary he was still trying to evoke emotion from the first rehearsal.

Performance in Class

I have constantly been told that performance should not happen only on stage. When taking class or in rehearsal, performance quality should be automatic. I have heard constantly how class is the preparation for the stage, so in order to look good on stage you have to go full out in class. Performing in class has always been a struggle for me. I become too insecure with what other people might think that I work more on technique and dynamics.

I remember when Tekla Kostek was our ballet instructor and the different exercises she would lead us in to help us relax and perform. One day in class she taught us a contemporary ballet phrase. She then proceeded to split us up into groups to allow us to use the space of the studio. The first time we performed the phrase she put on classical music that we would expect the combination to work with. We all danced generically. Nobody stood out, nobody traveled, we were all in class mode trying to achieve the extensions and pirouettes the phrase required. Tekla smiled and proceeded to put in the next type of music. Suddenly we were dancing a contemporary ballet work to country music. The next piece of music was a show tune, followed by a drum soundtrack, music by Meredith Monk, and then finishing the class with a pop tune. In watching the different groups perform the phrase I observed how with the change of music everybody's energy changed as well. Suddenly people were having fun and the performance aspect that was missing was found. Dancers were running out of space, pirouettes that were doubles people were suddenly achieving triples, and legs that were at 90 degrees were extending to above the hip. Tekla's point was that dance doesn't have to be

hard. When you treat the art form that you love with love you gain more. We are supposed to enjoy what we do and if we relax into the movement we perform. Performing also helps us achieve what we think is impossible. For the rest of the semester Tekla would point out to us that it is all right to make a mistake. As long as we are having fun we can achieve. She told us at any point we feel our selves tense up, to take a deep breath, smile, and enjoy what we are doing. To let that joy radiate to our faces so we can practice performing in class and not just assume we will achieve it on stage.

Performance in my modern classes has always been a struggle for me. I don't feel like any one of my teachers has taken a class to help us focus on performance quality in modern. What I have learned from class is that the performance should be from within and radiate out. The only concept that was ever really utilized was closing the eyes to feel the sensation of the movement. To feel where the movement was coming from on a deeper level. This helped me immensely in modern for the softer subtleties that we would create. However, I had a huge problem not staring solely on the ground. My focus became very direct in the fact that I was staring at the ground, however, my kinesphere was huge because I was not limiting myself strictly to that amount of space. I was seeing past the floor, to outside, to another world. Yet, if you perform for an audience you cannot have your head down and your eyes practically shut through the whole work. That can be a choreographic intention but that was not the point Holly Johnston was trying to make by having us close our eyes. I have discovered modern is more about expression rather than entertainment. It can be

entertaining and its sole purpose can be to entertain, but from the ideas I have collected from my professors and the books I have read, modern is more about the self and enjoying the movement that one can create from letting the body do its natural thing.

The hardest genre for me to perform is tap. I feel as though there is only one way to perform tap and that is by smiling and really feeling the groove of the music. When I perform tap I tend to feel a little ridiculous because in class we only ever enjoy the rhythms we create with the music. There is no other emotion to emote, so all I know how to do is have fun. Tap is entertaining so it does not call for a deep-rooted emotional connection. Yes, one should be connected to the work but I feel as long as you are enjoying yourself, the audience will enjoy the performance.

I have frequently been reminded how I need to perform more in jazz. Both Jason and Paige have told me that my technique is all there but my face is not sending the message of what my body is feeling. I had to be able to bring the performance quality right away and not back down and become timid. Something that they both told me to do was choose a role model in class that I could learn from. I chose Katie Schaar to watch in Jazz VI because she is always very powerful and dynamic to watch. She never fears away from performing and she has that quality of always drawing the attention. I stood next to her in class when I could and I paid close attention to how she executed her movements.

Besides having a role model we also discussed how I should take class outside LMU, so as to get out of the bubble and see how I survive. I noticed that

subconsciously my performance quality improved because I was trying to show how I had something to offer. I was not able to take class outside as much as I would have enjoyed but being in that different atmosphere I found myself working just as hard as I do in class but in a different way. I guess I had more of a healthy competitive attitude with the dancers at the Edge because I wanted the instructor to notice me. I try and have healthy competition with some of my peers at LMU but it is very different choosing somebody you do not know and having healthy competition.

Being the assistant for Jazz V has helped me immensely. Once again, I work hard in every class but I did not have the opportunity to back down from anything. I had to be on my game because I was the example. It was a different mind set for me because I do not always take that leadership position in dance. I had to go first, I had to know what I was doing, there was no room to be lazy and not push myself. My performance quality also improved because being the example and having to go first and in every group, I knew people were watching. If I was going to be the leader I had to show them exactly how to do something. I had to perform the combination from the beginning. I could not wait until I was comfortable with the movement, which I also realized was something that I normally would do.

After awhile I became comfortable with the performance aspect but my movement quality lacked finesse. I did not quite understand what that meant exactly until I watched myself on video. When told that I needed to have finesse I would experiment with other ways of moving but my energy remained the same.

Which I learned is fine but I needed to be able to channel it correctly and not look like I was the energizer bunny. Watching myself I saw how it appears that I am just buzzing with energy. There was no subtly or breath in my movement so I was unable to show any other kind of dynamic. I understand now that by lengthening or drawing out movements, or by simply being at the back of the beat rather than in front of it, my movement will look fuller and not look so exhausting.

In jazz we were each assigned a buddy to help and work with in achieving our own personal goal. My buddy's goal was the same as mine in the sense that we had to work on performance quality in class. My buddy is an incredible mover that needs to find some confidence. I see myself in her. I did some of the same habits she is doing my freshmen and sophomore year. I watch as she goes across the floor and I see her eyes go down or her mouth tense up and I just wonder how I went so long with out correcting that. By giving your eyes something to focus on, other than the floor, the movement and performance grows immediately. There is more intensity and dynamic in what you are doing with just a simple movement in the eyes. I also see with her that lengthening is also an issue; lengthening the arms, hands, legs. Getting her to use her legs and travel made a huge difference. Some exercises that I created for her I would apply to myself in class as well. I don't think that my buddy was too comfortable helping me and giving me corrections, which was fine for me. I was able to look and see how to help her and then I would apply the same ideas to myself. Something that I did before we would go across the floor is give her a word to think about. It

would be any kind of emotion or mood that I wanted her to feel as she went across the floor. I was hoping that by giving her an image, it would change something for her and help her performance. I would then take the same word and try the challenge as well. One day, when we were doing jazz walks I told her to play with her arms. To not make them sit so comfortable down by her sides but to move them around with the movement. She was unable to achieve this goal. My buddy was too focused on the movement that she could not escape it and play. Which I discover I do as well in certain situations. I am very proud of her in her ability to be more comfortable going first across the floor. That was a big challenge for her at the beginning of the semester because she was afraid of not knowing what she was doing. I do see how much she has grown in just this short amount of time and I hope that even when I am not there to constantly nag her she will be able to self motivate and realize what she still needs to achieve.

Her and I are very similar and having the opportunity to help her, made me realize how to help myself. I suddenly understood what was being asked of me all these years. It is a little disappointing that it has taken the concepts so long to process but I am just happy that they have and that hopefully what I have discovered about myself and shared with my buddy will help her to process and apply these ideas, which then will help her improve at a faster rate. Having that opportunity in my jazz class was very beneficial for it heightened my performance capabilities and let me share what I have learned on performance with the underclassmen.

Discovering to Perform

What is the difference from doing movement on a stage to performing on a stage? For me, performing allows me to come alive. It awakens something in my being that lets my animal, untamed and fearless come to action. I have discovered that when I perform in contrast to just moving I accomplish more. I tend to be more relaxed and involved in what I am doing that my movement becomes fuller. Performing hasn't always been easy for me. There was a period of time where I was too self-conscious of what I looked like and what people thought of me. I constantly looked at the ground and the only time I would actually perform would be on stage. I was in a bubble where I thought I was performing but was not achieving my fullest capabilities. I do not believe that I actually understood what performance felt like until this year.

I have always prided myself on the fact that I could dance many different genres of dance. It wasn't until this year that people started noticing. My freshman year I performed in a ballet, jazz and tap piece; which is extremely versatile but when you had the performance quality that I had you would discover the same dancer in every work. My goal this year was to be in different dances and look like a different dancer. Every work requires a distinctive type of energy for that piece and I did not discover how to achieve that technique until this year. This was the year that people actually noticed how versatile I was. I think it was understood that I could accomplish different techniques and styles but I that I was not quite mature in my performance process yet.

Faculty Concert I was in two modern pieces and a tap dance and it was commented on how my performance ability has changed since being a first year; that there is more to my performing than just bright eyes and a big smile. I realized what it was to be emotionally involved. I have such a problem being emotionally involved in my own life that I never realized that it would carry over into my dancing. I was told freshman and sophomore year that I needed to discover who I was. I didn't understand this comment because I thought I knew everything about myself. Everything I knew was merely surface. My performance at the beginning of college was a smile. I was performing but it was mainly 'happy go-lucky Susi'. My performance ability now I feel has deepened itself into my soul because now when I step out to perform I feel my whole body performing rather than just my face. Directing my focus to certain objects when I dance has helped me engage deeper into movement vocabulary. I feel I really have grasped the idea of how to perform in working with Holly Johnston and Karen McDonald. Their styles of modern are very different and I cannot approach their work the same way. Working with them I have discovered how to perform their genres of modern, and have learned how to approach other choreographer's styles by the devices they used in their rehearsal process.

With Karen McDonald's work I needed to come up with a situation in my life that was plaguing me that I knew I had to fix. Having that story I was more in tune with why I was doing certain movements. I had an intention for each step in that dance. I had to go through a struggle both emotionally and physically. Whereas in Holly Johnston's work I did not need to come up with a story to be

emotionally engaged. By directing my focus off the floor I had more of a dynamic in my body to achieve the vocabulary and at the same time brought that active quality to the audience. Her work deals with a lot of athletic terrain and in order to achieve the quality she is expecting you have to enter her work with confidence, the more confidence the better the work will look. I asked her what her intentions were for our performance. How was I supposed to perform her piece emotionally if there was no story or history of the characters? She responded:

I feel what my work does is offer a dancer an opportunity to learn how to be a more honest performer. To be more authentic and genuine in the expressions of risk, the expression of luxurious pleasurable sensation. That those become genuine actualized sensations and they are not false, mimicked, or mimed. They're lived and experienced. And I think that when you live that kind of risk and you live the actualization of that kind of physicality, it makes you more confident. It creates a bolder sense of self inside your body and I think it makes you a more courageous performer because you understand both the limits and the limitless possibilities of the body.

I took that challenge of risk and had healthy competition with myself at every rehearsal and performance. There were large jumps and falls with in her phrases, that I would challenge myself to get higher each time I attempted the movement. I wanted my falls to be more off center and my jumps to be higher. I wanted the risk in jumping and landing to look more extreme. I played with all these ideas and found myself feeling accomplished at the end of the dance because I was able

to achieve something that I thought was impossible. It was fuel for my next performance to see if I could out do what I had just achieved. I had a deeper connection to my body and my nervous system because I became fearless. I took each challenge and met it.

Karen's rehearsals were very serious and we would achieve a great deal of choreography at every rehearsal. I remember needing to change my attitude towards rehearsals every Thursday because the first couple rehearsals we had were very intimidating that I was afraid to go. It was very different from the rehearsals we would have in Holly's on Wednesdays. In Holly's rehearsals we would laugh and experiment trying to achieve new and interesting material. Holly explained that in order to perform her work she brings laughter into the process:

I feel like my process is always infused with humor. That we laugh a lot. That we are very serious about what we do but we don't take ourselves so seriously that we can't risk or fall down, or laugh at the bad ideas. Then we can celebrate the really good ones. But I feel like it helps us encounter the rigor and the fear of so much risk and the fear of all the new sensations that we have, if we laugh.

For me, laughter helps me to relax my muscles from over thinking and to just experiment and try. Holly's rehearsals were fun and I enjoyed going.

Karen had a different approach. It worked for me but I don't believe her method would work for everybody. I was constantly told to just 'do' something: to not allow my body to make a mistake. That is a lot of pressure and my body would tense up in fear of making a mistake. However, I ended up pushing myself

harder than if I had not been under such force to succeed. I was able to achieve more. My extensions were higher, my balances improved, and my pirouettes were better. I had found my core and was learning how to utilize it in every position.

Karen often gave us exercises for performance. She would start out having us do the dance, not moving at all but feeling. We had to go through the work with the music and just let our spirit move us. How would we move, what were we feeling that led us to do something? We had to keep the skeleton of the piece as we did this but there was a lot of improv with each other and with in ourselves as we discovered whom our characters were. After the first time we experimented we were all astounded by the connections we immediately felt with one another. We suddenly were able to come up with a story for ourselves and with those we were dancing with on stage. Karen would have us repeat this exercise many times and every time we would start again we had to dance more full out. By the end we were not only dancing to our fullest potential but also our performance was wrapped with in our movement. We were moving because we were feeling something from with in which caused us to move. It was an incredible feeling that I had never experienced before. Every movement and every moment suddenly made sense to me. I was dancing from with in and my body was simply following.

Associate Mastery with Optimism



Every dancer wants to make the stage come alive through her performance.

I like to think that the stage I am dancing on is alive and that the floor underneath me is breathing. There is an energy exchange between my body and the floor that is not just mechanical. You can also think of sculpting or painting the space so that you progressively shape it and leave a permanent mark. At the end of the dance, evidence of the very first step can still be

“seen” beneath layers of other movements.

Eric Franklin

Associate Mastery with Optimism

What is dance? Dance is continuous for it is constantly evolving to mold with the changes of history. I discovered that the artistic journey in creating movement is different for each person. According to Twyla Tharp, in her novel, *The Creative Habit*, she thinks of dance as process in stimulating the mind and spirit, to maintain a positive approach to new works not yet imagined. Where as, author Daniel Nagrin, in his novel, *Choreography and the Specific Image*, he tries to evoke collaborative energy that will facilitate exportation of the unexpected. Dance becomes a creative process that stems from a choreographers emotional and physical background both as a dancer and as a human being. Dance is not just movement but about the emotional connection in formulating a statement. For the choreographer, dance personifies an intention that can only be spoken through movement. In this paper I will discuss different choreographer's processes in creating; techniques for writer's block; and the motivation to create with the acknowledgement of failure. I will do so by using the publications of Twyla Tharp, Daniel Nagrin, and my own personal experiences both as a dancer and as a choreographer.

What is an aspect of dance that can motivate someone to step into the same room every day and move? For me, dance becomes an opportunity in which to exercise the creative habit; either through performance opportunities or choreographing. I have to constantly keep pushing myself to try new styles and take more risks because for me I am afraid of falling into a habit. For Twyla she states:

There's a paradox in the notion that creativity should be a habit. ...That paradox intrigues me because it occupies the place where creativity and skill rub up against each other...No one is born with that skill. It is developed through exercises, repetition, through a blend of learning and reflection that's both painstaking and rewarding. And it takes time (Tharp 9).

I understand her view but disagree with it to some extent. Skill takes practice but I do not think you necessarily have to have training in order for you to create. There have been many artists who have not been trained and yet have developed beautiful works. It is definitely a learning process in which to refine and grow for future projects but I do not think that someone is incapable of creating if they have not had enough practice to expand whatever skill they were born with.

Dancers and choreographers alike are very hard on themselves. Trying to create something new is a challenge and only the true artists willing to face that fight are shown through this journey. According to Daniel Nagrin, his view is slightly differently than that of Twyla's:

...find your dance, don't make it. It is there, in you and in the world around you. You do not have to make up anything. You do not have to pretend. Despite the costumes, the lights, the makeup and the entire baggage of theatrical make-believe, the core of your dance can be whatever it is that is alive on the other side of make-believe (Nagrin 27).

Having the passion to create I think is the most important factor in choreographing. What Nagrin is simply saying is to look inside yourself because that is where your creativity exists. It is a secret place that only you know about and it takes courage to find it and present it to the world. I think that once you have an idea and let that idea motivate you to move, the music, lighting, and costumes can also inspire to help push the artist to new heights to further develop the idea.

A conception may be years in the making. Where an idea starts matters not...Write it down, immediately. Just because you did get an idea is not enough to go work on it. Before you begin to put out the kind of energy that dance demands, the idea wants testing; does the thought of it quicken you? Does it make you breathe a little faster? Supposing you did not work on it? Ideally, the idea should force itself upon you, not the other way around (Nagrin 28).

Before you can think out of the box, you have to start with a box. Twyla explains how before she starts choreographing she forms a box of inspiration. This box is just a normal box but everything that inspires her that can relate to the work she is

formulating, she puts in the box. This concept reminds me of a costume designer. Costume designers use the same idea when they are at work. They find pictures, colors, objects that give off the same mood that they want their costumes to portray. When I started choreographing I had formed a file. I put different ideas, pictures, quotes that all seemed to give off the same message that I wanted my choreography to represent. Putting all my ideas in my folder made me feel secure that I would never lose any motivation to keep pushing myself. I didn't have to worry about forgetting an idea or losing an image because it is all within my file: "I find the box is most useful at three critical stages: when you're getting going, when you're lost, and after you've finished (that's when you can look back and see the directions you didn't take, ... (Tharp 90). Nagrin explains in his article how he is a very private person when creating. He doesn't share his ideas with anybody. However, he did give the reader some insight and explained that when an idea develops for him the music has encouraged him several times to develop a work. Nagrin also writes everything down. Whereas he may not place as much significance as Twyla does with a box, he does save whatever he writes down for inspiration. "...with no effort or planning, the entire idea assembled itself. The organization was so clearly assembled on a bit of notepaper in that Chinese restaurant that I kept it with me for the duration of the work on the dance as a guide" (Nagrin 29).

I am a very visual person so having a file has kept me focused and on track in completing my work. A problem that could arise is the box could become a handicap. Some dancers become too caught up with the images they could put in their box. They suddenly use 'researching' for their work as a cover, while in all honesty fear has trapped them. Tharp explains: "The box is not a substitute for creating. The box doesn't compose or write a poem or create a dance step. The box is the raw index of your preparation. It is the repository of your creative potential, but it is not that potential realized" (Tharp 88). Many dancers can lead themselves into a rut researching their piece and never creating a work. They procrastinate and don't ever escape the box they have formed for themselves. They trap themselves:

Sadly, some people never get beyond the box stage in their creative life. We all know people who have announced that they've started work on a project – say, a book – but some time passes, and when you politely ask how it's going, they tell you that they're still researching. Weeks, months, years pass and they produce nothing...Maybe they're just taking procrastination to a new extreme. All I know for sure is that they are trapped in the box. My solution for them: This isn't working. Free yourself. Get out of this box. Put it away for another day and start a new box. But do so with the faith that nothing is lost, that you haven't put in all this effort for naught. Everything you've done is in this box. You can always come back to it. (Tharp 89).

Having a goal, an idea, an image and writing it down on paper helps tremendously to focus all your ideas. This exercise of a box has become a comfort zone; something that you can trust in that you know you can count on.

The first time I started choreographing I was at a complete loss of how to start, what to do. It was a whole new process of creating that I had not let myself be privy to.

What works for one person is useless for another. The only criterion is this: Make it easy on yourself. Find a working environment where the prospect of wrestling with your muse doesn't scare you, doesn't shut you down. It should make you want to be there, and once you find it, stick with it. To get the creative habit, you need a working environment that's habit-forming (Tharp 17).

I put myself in the middle of the studio and just waited, listening to the sounds around me. I couldn't let frustration get the better of me otherwise I would have never accomplished anything. Just being in the studio I suddenly felt more comfortable and ready to work than when I was anticipating the whole process: "No one starts a creative endeavor without a certain amount of fear; the key is to learn how to keep free-floating fears from paralyzing you before you've begun" (Tharp 22). Fear played a huge role in my creative process before I had even begun. I had decided to try a darker approach to a work than I had done before and I didn't know where to begin and how to keep my theme through out the work. There were several times before I even started when I just wanted to give up because of my fear that my choreography would be disappointing.

...the task of starting with nothing and working your way toward creating something whole and beautiful and satisfying...Some people find this moment – the moment before creativity begins – so painful that they simply cannot deal with it...They procrastinate. In its most extreme form, this terror totally paralyzes people. (Tharp 5-6)

There have been several times in the past where I wanted to choreograph but my horror blocked my mind and I procrastinated so long that I suddenly gave up. With the confidence of friends and my own inner voice screaming at me to ignore myself, I was able to push forward this time. My process suddenly started resembling the techniques I learned in Styles and Forms. I came up with a phrase and found myself using the movement several times through out my work. However, I used techniques like repetition, augmentation, diminution, transposition. The movement resembled each other but ended up being two completely different phrases. I also then used a method of choreographing that I learned in Friday Workshop. I came up with movement using the lower half of my body. Then standing still I came up with an arm phrase. I then integrated them together forming one very detailed phrase.

Nagrin has a whole chapter dedicated to improvisation as a choreographic technique. “It should be evident that I regard improvisation as a vital tool. In my own way of working, it is the first physical step in constructing a dance. Almost always, there is an initial mental process of reflection, conjecture and imagination that draws me to the idea” (Nagrin 36). I have used improvisation as a means of choreography but I find that my challenge in doing so, is remembering all the details of what I had just performed. I have learned that is the feeling behind my movement that I need to remember and not the steps themselves. An exercise Karen McDonald gave us in Friday workshop and in her rehearsal was to go through the work with out dancing. We had to feel where the movement was coming from, not just do steps. Eventually we started adding smaller amounts of movement back into the work until we had the whole dance, however the primary goal remained: just feel. I found this process very gratifying because it helped me to create a story. I suddenly wasn’t just moving I was dancing.

When we decide to perform we take on the responsibility of taking risks which do not always lead to success. "If we are to present ourselves in the theatre, we must be aware that it is an arena of life and death" (Nagrin 120). I have seen quite a few dances that have had high potential but never formulated into anything spectacular because the choreographer was too timid to battle their inner demons. If you let your fears become a habit it will show in everything you present. You have to take the time to form a ritual of positive self-talk to help motivate and push you into new territory that is physically, mentally, and emotionally challenging.

Dancers have to train themselves to be motivated by failure. They hate failure but are also very intimate with it because they fail so many times a day: "Every creative person has to learn to deal with failure, because failure, like death and taxes, is inescapable" (Tharp 212). It is a difficult task because we all have very high expectations of who we want to be, that when we fail it can be difficult to get up and try again. Twyla explains: "Failure creates an interesting tug of war between forgetting and remembering. It's vital to be able to forget the pain of failure while retaining the lessons from it." (Tharp 214). Dancers who don't move on after a disappointment fall faster and never succeed or grow in their creativity because they live with each failure at the center of there being. They are weighed down by dissatisfaction and self-esteem issues that any potential they once had becomes lost:

In the creative process, it is almost inevitable that there will come the day when you see with stunning clarity that what you have made is hopelessly inept, unoriginal, misshapen and best described as "garbage". If you can get through that day and continue with the work, you may very well produce something quite beautiful. (Nagrin 162)

I have looked at my choreography many times with such disgust but have found that even that mind set is part of the process. Taking a different look at the work helps to formulate new ideas and push the choreography into new territories. Trying to keep a positive outlook is the challenge but in doing so, the overall experience is much more gratifying.

Dancers can appreciate failure more than non-artists because even though it can be the plague we understand the importance of its function. Dancers understand

that in order to fly, one has to fall. “When you fail in public, you are forcing yourself to learn a whole new set of skills, skills that have nothing to do with creating and everything to do with surviving” (Tharp 214). A dancer has to be responsible enough to learn how to house their failures so that they can recycle them for later works. My biggest problem that I have struggled with, especially through high school was failure of nerve: “You have everything going for you except the guts to support your idea and explore the concept fully. The corrosive thought that you would look foolish holds you back from telling the truth...looking foolish is good for you. It nourishes the spirit” (Tharp 216). As an artist we have to constantly revisit our past so as to learn from the ideas that worked and didn’t work. I cared too much what other people thought about my work that I didn’t take the leadership role and step into the shoes that I wanted to fill. I was shying away from my true potential and I needed to make a shift in my life and believe in my work.

Both Tharp’s and Nagrin’s ideas on techniques for stimulating creativity are one of method and skill. Their ideas and stories are inspiring and encouraging. This knowledge has enlightened my way of thinking and driven me to reevaluate how I observe my process as an artist. I need to pay attention more to the habits and rituals that I have formed in my day. The details of those rituals could be something that I could use later in my works. I need to take more risk and believe that I can succeed. I need not to ignore my failures but to embrace them and use them.

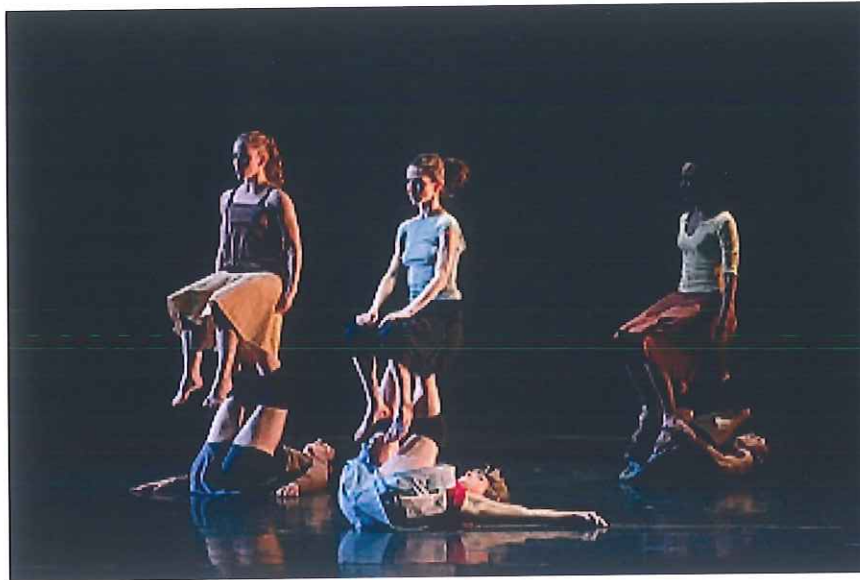
Is there anything more vulnerable than the defining of any art form? That is as it should be. Art, like science, is about what we don’t know, only more so. Who dares define “abstract art”?...Choreography primarily concerned with the configurations and energies in space and time is abstract dance even if there is the semblance of character involved in some sort of scenario. This definition can be spun out to refer to all the other arts (Nagrin 99).

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Personal Aesthetics



Who is me? How does one talk about the Me?
Where does one begin? What is the make up of the artist?
Who is the person on stage, and who is that other one offstage?
Who is the one that creates, and who is the one that worries about
shopping and laundry? Why is it so hard for an artist to talk about
himself with out contradictions either in word or deed...

Murray Louise

My Voice

“Modern dance identifies itself as aesthetic, whereas revue and musical theatre dancing know themselves to be entertaining” (Sally Banes).

My goal is to have an aesthetic that incorporates both ideas, I want to be artistic but entertaining. I want to express my inner dialogue but I don't want to be trite or cliché in the movement that I create. Working with professionals and attending The American College Dance Festival I was able to see a lot of personal aesthetics which inspired me to create movement using my voice and to try to be unique in my movement and not be completely influenced by my mentors. I took a risk and went on a journey into unfamiliar territory, when I decided to choreograph. My goal was to create movement that would resemble how I feel comfortable moving in my skin. The choreography of course would bear a similarity to that of my instructors who have influenced me but primarily the movement would be my own. Deciding to choreograph I immediately put myself up for judgment. It was a test that subconsciously I had developed to see if I could reach the standards that I had created. To please both the mind and the body is a difficult task because they are two separate entities that fuel each other.

I needed an intention, an inspiration to help me choreograph. Going to Italy this summer I was deeply moved by many of the sculptures and paintings. My freshman year in Fundamentals of Composition we were instructed to create a solo based on sculptures. In Italy I saw the sculpture I had used. Giovanni Bologna created the sculpture in hopes to portray the early history of Rome through art. The spiral movement of figures in the

mannerist work anticipates Baroque sculpture. It has two men and one woman. The statue depicts that of a dominant figure as he is caring away the woman. I saw a story in the statue and thought it would be interesting to create a work based on the piece of art. I discussed the idea with a couple of my peers who gave me great encouragement. They suggested that since my personality is so uplifting and bubbly, it would be more of an impact for the audience and myself if I took a risk and created a work with more of a dark tone. It was also pointed out that if I used the sculpture again my senior year, I would have come full circle from what I produced freshmen year to what I would present senior year.

I had an inspiration and I developed a story or a theme that I wanted my dance to resemble. I found music that helped create the motif I was going to speak through movement. My goal was to show how one person affects the lives of many, creating a chain reaction. The motif would be a fight for constant dominance over another being using aggression and defeat.

I wanted to be organized and prepared for my first rehearsal so I went to the studio to figure out a plan. I wanted to come up with movement phrases so I could start with my dancers. However, after an hour of listening to the music and standing in the space I had achieved nothing. I was very nervous to choreograph and my mind was drawing a blank on any movement that I had ever done. I collapsed to the ground and tried to relax myself before I started trying to move again. The different choreographic devices came into my mind and I decided to start with an idea that I had learned in Friday workshop and in Dance History, when I watched a dance video that included the work, *Arms*, by Susan Marshall. *Arms*, is a duet performed by a couple using just their

upper body. I was fascinated by the work because even though the movement was not taking up large amounts of space (they don't move), there is such conviction and passion in their performance that the audience can see a plot line even though the legs are not moving. I learned a great deal from that piece on performance quality because they did not need space to create a story. The texture of the work and the commitment from the dancers facilitated a story that the audience felt a part of. Whether or not they understood the choreographer's intention, as an audience member I felt satisfied at what I saw and interpreted. It something that I hope I can achieve in my aesthetic.

I used the idea of moving segments of my body. I started out by just moving the lower half of my body and easily came up with a phrase. Then I made an arm phrase and put the two together. It was a very interesting phrase. I observed that both of the phrases I created were very detailed and complex. After creating that one phrase I felt more at ease and was able to create another phrase. The second phrase came more naturally just from improving around in the studio.

The day of my first rehearsal I went to the library to watch a video that has inspired me since the first time I saw it in Styles and Forms, *Fandango*, created by Lar Lubovitch. It is an entrancing modern duet that romantically unfolds into something spectacular. There movement has constant flow through out the dance, which I realized I try to do in my choreography as well. I do not like to think of any part of my work as a transition. If there is a section of my dance that would be considered a 'transition' it should hold just as much weight as the rest of the choreography. I took notes and felt inspired to go to my rehearsal.

After teaching three phrases I had almost three minutes of material. My music was used as wallpaper but as certain sections with in my dance the music and choreography would connect. With each rehearsal, I took what I learned from Styles and Forms and applied the devices to my work. The structure came so easily when I used directional changes, augmented the movement and transposed the phrases to higher and lower levels. My work was becoming a dance. I rarely had all three movers facing the front doing the same movement. However, all the choreography correlated nicely.

Half way through the rehearsal process I realized that I needed to become more in touch with who the characters were. I had not given my dancers enough information so there performance quality was not as strong as there skills in the dance. After discovering who I wanted them to be and what I wanted them to feel I came up with words to create images to help them become more emotionally attached to the work. I then went through the dance and gave them energy qualities letting them know what parts of the dance should have a bound flow and what should have a freeing sense. Laban helped immensely when explaining to my dancers my ideas. When I clarified where there focus should be through out and what sections deserved more breath and stillness the movement was immediately affected because there performance ability had grown.

After struggling with ideas and developing the solo work I realized that my movement used a lot of bound flow and active weight. I also had quite a lot of slashing, spoking, and arching through out. I discovered that I love detail and constant movement. It was very hard for me to have anybody just still and quiet on the stage. I felt that no matter what somehow everybody had to be moving. I realized that in my own life I hate sitting still. I am constantly moving some part of me even at times I should not be

moving. There were specific motifs that I had created for each character through out the dance. It helped define who that character was and made it clear to the audience when they were starting to transition and be affected by the other movers on stage, when the motifs of the other characters were becoming ingrained in them. My dance really only consisted of three or four phrases that I augmented, repeated, and diminished to death.

I was deeply gratified by the work I created for the Student Dance Concert. The creative process is a definite journey but it was wonderful to figure out my aesthetic and watch it develop with each rehearsal. The feedback I received from my peers and faculty was also very encouraging. My whole purpose was to find my voice and the main comment that I received was that people were watching 'mini Susi's on stage'. They described some of the movement in my dance and told me they saw my face on the bodies performing. I learned that I love detail, forced arch, and intricate footwork. I chose to have a clear story line and I think that is the theatre aspect of who I am. It was easier for me to develop using a plot line. It helped organize my thoughts and generate movement. At one point I found that in trying to find my own voice I got lost in the standards of perfection. It was a 'writer's block' but when I went back to those aspects that inspired me in the first place I found my calming point and was able to create again. I enjoy my aesthetic and I am excited to keep developing and diving into unknown territory.

Emily's Aesthetic

Vulnerability and Strength

In high school, Emily loved dancing to music but felt that she wasn't very educated in her style or development of movement. In college she became more aware of all the possibilities that dance held. She still loves dancing to music for it has become a source of release for her. However, she has experimented with no music and found her aesthetic to grow and her movement quality to expand. After attending the American College Dance Festival she came back to LMU in "Ahh" because of the incredible performers, instructors, and student choreographers that attended. Emily's purpose for dancing is to challenge herself everyday in hopes that she can become a more consistent performer.

Emily loves watching orthodox movement but really takes pleasure in the imperfections of movement. When you see something generic there is no need to do anything artistic if it is just to repeat the same thing over and over again. Emily is an organic mover and enjoys the sensation of her whole body reacting to a movement. Her aesthetic is somewhat sensual with athletic modern influence. She primarily choreographs on women and not men because of her sensual movements. It is hard for her to envision working with a man for fear of how he would portray the movement and respond. Her goal is for the audience to see the women as sexy and strong but not objectively sexy. She enjoys her movement quality and knows that her aesthetic will never be super detailed because she is a 'whole body reactor.' Choreographing for Emily is a release for it lets her say many different things without ever having to find the right words.

She loves to dance because it provides the opportunity for her to accomplish great things that she does not feel like she could achieve outside the dance studios. Her work is somewhat subliminal for it allows her to be everything she feels internally. She is emotionally invested in the work because the movement she creates all comes from a very deep and personal part of her life. It has become a physical journal because she does not keep a journal with words. For Emily, every time she steps out on a stage she is honest in her emotions for it becomes a release, it becomes therapy.

Emily has discovered that the best thing about choreographing is watching her cast perform her work and give back the performance. Watching them perform she feels as though they are having a conversation with her on stage through her movement. She gives her dancers an emotion, not necessarily telling them a story in hopes that they will apply an emotion to themselves and have their own story. Her aesthetic shows vulnerability but strength. Those two concepts are juxtaposing with in her life that they come out in her work. They identify who she is and it would be impossible for those characteristics not to play some part in her movement quality.

Ms. DePauw is one of few artists that have an honest and genuine desire to create and perform. Working with her creatively and dancing with her in class I have been inspired by her motivation and drive to constantly grow. Emily is intelligent in her body and is aware of her strengths as an artist, along with the areas she can improve upon. Her willingness to work and push herself is inspiring and motivating. I am fortunate to have met her and I have grown a great deal from her by watching her in class and listening to her speak.

“When you figure something out and discover something new it is all worth it. It is not always a perfect moment and easy...it is work. To talk with just your mouth is a terrible waste of your body, I like being able to communicate through dance. Sometime I communicate through dance and sometimes dance communicates with me and tells me something I did not know about myself”
Emily DePauw

Reflective Analysis on Rehearsals



When the performance begins,
abandon all effort to figure out what it means; it will not mean
anything unless you do this.

Merely relax and let the muscles do the thinking.
It is not easy at first, persistence will have its effect in due time.

John Martin

Shift: Journal Entries

September 15th, 2005

- The work is about Shift. Having to change, needing to change, whatever that might be for you
- Karen showed us an anatomy book about the body. Discussed how the body should move.
- Karen led us in a warm up.
- The first phrase she taught us had many chasses and runs. The second phrase dealt with more of the upper body and footwork.
- A big emphasis with Karen is that after the last move in a phrase, the dancer must hold the position. We rehearsed many times jumping into an arabesque and holding the arabesque.
- Rehearsal was slightly challenging and a little intimidating. However, I am ready to work.

September 18th, 2005

- This rehearsal was only an hour and a half. We warmed ourselves up, she gave us each a chair, and told us to play
- The goal is to focus on shift and who are characters will be
- Karen made us think about something that we needed to change in ourselves, something that maybe other people had told us was a flaw that we wanted to fix
- As we were improving with the chair Karen came to us each individually and gave us a piece of choreography
- My storyline: I have to pretend that I am ok when I am not really. When people are watching, I smile. When there backs are turned, I am pleading for someone to help me. This was an interesting storyline for her to give me because I have dealt with many friends telling me that I am emotionless. Many people are curious as to why I always smile and can't express myself in any other way.
- This work is very feminine. We practiced walking on our toes for a while trying to have a subtle sexiness about us. I like feeling like a girl

September 22, 2005

- I came to rehearsal tired but as soon as we started the process my energy changed and I was ready to work
- The theme of the rehearsal was about control. Cinching up our core to provide support for the rest of the body.
- We had to perform the phrase we learned in rehearsal by ourselves. I went first, not really by choice but because I was provoked. For some reason she

feels like I hate going first. I don't mind it I just never do it. It is a shift I guess I could try. Taking more risk I suppose.

- We started cleaning up phrase we work we had created at the last rehearsal. Karen asked me to show the cast a move that I was doing that nobody else was achieving. When I performed it for them she said I performed it differently then when I was dancing with the sense that nobody was watching. I did not feel like I was dancing differently for the cast but it was an interesting observation that I should pay attention to.
- From the first moment you walk into class, you have to grow
- Every dance involves a different kind of energy
- When you dance you need to take in and see more of your surroundings. It gives you a different kind of perspective that can heighten your movement
- The entire cast can heighten the movement if you are aware of other people, surroundings, environment
- There is a lot of work involved after you do the work
- You need to be playful
- Steal from incredible dancers, have integrity
- Never let your fear get bigger than your desire
- Take a stand
- There's big miracles and small miracles – be aware and do a miracle
- Live life the way you want to see it. Don't live with limitations. Take a risk and trust yourself.
- Every day is an opportunity. Make a change, take a risk and shift.
- Don't live in fear. Once you lose fear you gain art, discovery, and courage. It is an exchange of joy.
- Everything is about process (growing and lengthening)
- Don't believe a person's words "I love you", believe, they love you through their actions.
- Dynamics and precision are everything.
- Food for thought: "I can give it when no one's watching but as soon as they see me I lose something"
- Life Skills – you learn it everyday in class

September 25th, 2005

- Karen lectured to us how the idea of the work is not anything she can give us. It needs to be a shift that we find with in ourselves
- She explained how shift happens all the time. The obvious is when you stand up after sitting or vice versa. A change in thought.... shift happens all the time.
- We had to discuss one at a time what we were feeling at this part of the process. I explained how I was surprised that the feeling she told me to explore was the same problem my friends were expressing about me. That I hide my emotions and they cannot tell when I need help or am sad. They feel as though I 'pretend' most of the time.

- Karen explained to me that my role in this department is one of leadership. I have to not be afraid of that leadership position and take a hold of it.
- Today's rehearsal we worked a lot on technique. I discovered that I am lazy in certain aspects of my technique. I can push myself to go farther and have not been.
- Karen showed us her anatomy book again and explained how we all need more muscle. She told us how we can all do more, and we should set up an exercise program for ourselves.
- Dancing does not always have to take place on a stage or in a studio...do it in your room.

October 13, 2005

- Shift in Conciseness.
- Movement in Mind and Body
- The movement needs to come from a place of passion

Sections of the dance:

1. Something's Gotta Change
2. ?
3. Metamorphosis: It's about a change for the better. That doesn't always mean happy go lucky. JA change for the better just means out of your comfort zone.

* This work needs to move you. It needs to be something you're passionate about. Something that when you think about it, it changes you.

October 16, 2005

- Healthy competition: you have to want to be the best dancer in the room. Out stage everybody.
- There are no boundaries.
- Keep exploring and taking risks. Constantly push yourself. You have to be the leader.
- So much accomplished in one rehearsal
- By digging into who we are...who are characters are, we will have seen growth in our dancing but also in our lives. People will be able to see our change.

Homework for the Week:

- It is vital to pay close attention to the instructor
- Stay in the front of every class

October 27th, 2005

Sections:

- Something's Different
- I don't know (I know that I am changing, I know that I'm moving in some direction – I just don't know where)

- Transformation (Not yet been choreographed)
- Need to use the floor more. Feel the ground
- Complete each line; extend until the last possible moment until you can't reach any further
- Hold everything longer...balance
- Don't let the transitions look like transitions
- Choreographed the last section: Transformation (Should represent a sense of freedom and liberation)
- The first two sections of the work should represent anxiety and strife
- We are too heavy on our feet...we need to lift up and be a dancer
- Costumes will really help
- She wants to add another story amongst choreography
- She wants to rearrange second part
- Transformation will be happy

November 6, 2005

- Third section: Transformed/ Knowing (New section: more rhythmic and syncopated)
- The transformation should have softness and be feminine but strong
- We should feel as though we are blossoming into the person you want to be
- Need to be confident
- We need to incorporate feminine gestures: i.e. brushing of hair
- Be in love with your feet. Use them!
- Transitions are a huge problem. Our generation has lost the true meaning of transitions and we need to realize that we still need to move through them and treat them as part of the dance, they are just as important as the rest of the work
- First section: Heavy drama and emotion. Evolve to "I understand". Really let go
- Coordination consists of size of the movement
- Motivation come from passion
- You can do anything if you're in the right state of mind (i.e. insane)
- Technique and emotion need to be a marriage
- Take a correction as a way to open up a new world of possibilities
- Breath is a conscious awareness of life
- Each movement needs breath – needs to be seen
- Dancer = superhero
- Don't ever say "I thought I did it"
- Don't ever say it's hard to emote drama because everybody has drama
- We have to be leaders of the dance department. It is up to us to "up the level"
- You have to be Julliard conscious

November 17th, 2005

- "I want to do a work that the people involved can use"
- Our performance should be a big to do (at LMU), but it has to be bigger than that. We put on a show and then put it away.
- As a senior you should be the best, you have been here the longest. Underclassmen will be superb but seniors will be looked at differently because they are leaving.
- Seniors: It should be time to go, nothing more here, have to move on.
- Shift from last year at LMU to what we you are setting up for yourselves in life
- What's your legacy at LMU? What the inspiration for prospective students who sit in the audience (seniors responsibility)?
- Needs to be a shift to whatever your dreams are. You have to start defining what that is
- Now we need to explore and shift to new heights
- Have a plan
- "Once we can define exactly it is we want, then everything begins to line up to give us that"
- You need to give yourself permission to let go
- "Until you get the light, that inkling, the burning from with in that's when the shift happens. It starts in the mind"
- "When you get on a mission things change"
- "What we're trying to get is the shift that starts as an idea and moves into a manifestation"
- "Life can be so good when you direct it towards business"
- "You have to be careful you don't sabotage what you want"
- "I don't like auditions, I feel bad"

What I personally need to work on:

- Had the fire, risk factor, space, clarity of movement
- All things I have accomplished, so now it is time to take all of those things and refine it. Let that take me to a new level.
- Lengthen and expand. (Keep working on feeling and emoting)
- Expand Kinesphere—Bring more to audience. If you project emotionally to the audience they can offer you something in return to help you move on

On stage

- Karen prays to have the experience of seeing the work for the first time. She wants to have an open mind, pedestrian, and no connection to the work.

November 20th, 2005

- Need a formula. Starts in the mind: movement/visualization. Example: Second position grand plie – mind, core/floor, send energy in the form of a line.
- There are 'V' shapes all through out the back of the body
- Mind, core, lift (front and back), floor, creation, story/breath/style

- Dense body vs. Light body – you have to kill the dense body when you dance. You have to be a light, which will help lead the body into a transformation. The lighter you are the more powerful.
- You have to stay focused. “Your focus is what guides you through life”
- “In focusing you need to keep your thoughts guarded. It’s easy to go spiraling to never never land. Get rid of the chitter chatter that runs through your head”
- This is a project. It is a work that can change our life. It is now (for Karen) a legacy to pass on the knowledge her teachers gave her
- You have to balance out what you do in dance with every aspect of your life. “This is not a test tube experiment. We are taking what we learn in this laboratory and bringing it out into the real world”
- “Don’t take your ballet class in a capsule” You have to get into the collective consciousness of the class. What are you bringing to the class?”
- Being a leader, it is your responsibility to bring up the energy of the class
- Physical and mental parts of the body blending with the spirits
- Through this project we are learning about our goals and desires
- ‘Life is about movement’
- Example: Jacuzzi – When you drop a rock in, it causes the water to ripple. When it hits the wall it goes back and meets new ripples that are coming out when two meet they collapse upon each other (in physics). With in that moment everything is possible. That collapse is when our thoughts and manifestations come together. You have to actively move towards the goal
- We are individuals, we are alone. Don’t get so caught up in it. When you start exploring your universe, your world you can start having relationships.
- You have to constantly raise the level of your consciences (awareness)
- When we get to the theatre it won’t be about dancing anymore it will be about your transformation. Your need to guide your experience, your self, through out the process
- Negative thoughts, ‘fear’, is a parasite that we fuel our thoughts
- In an interview, (or audition), it would be foolish to be nervous. You didn’t have the job to begin with so you have nothing to lose if you do not get it.
- It is our time now, in college, to come up with what we want in life. It is our time now to practice that.
- We are kept in line by ideas and concepts the universe (something else) presents to us. We think sometimes we are weak by those that control us, but we are not weak. It is just a process of our mind.
- Being here on this planet is to discover the essence of what we are.
- Life is like a movie. It is your script, you wrote it, you are the casting director, costume designer, artistic director, cameraman...you are all of that. If something isn’t working on your movie, you can change it.
- Get everything out of every experience no matter where you are. You have to have that drive with in yourself. When you go to an audition you have to be equally yoked with the ‘competition’.
- People control you by their stories. You hear the same stories over and over again that it tends to become a truth

- “Why don’t we give up in rehearsal” – Certain things are just unacceptable – it is the work ethic that has been set up; we are motivated to keep going.
- You have to push, give space, push, and give space that is how a person grows.
- People try and match their environment. Tall people tend to dance beneath themselves if they aren’t tall people in the class because there is nobody to match or have ‘healthy competition’ with, so they get lazy
- Mind set – you have to get people to start thinking they want the best of themselves to push them to new heights. There is no ‘they’.
- When you ask the question: “how do you get the motivation back?” Answer: I get the motivation back. How: anyway you can. Answer to any question. You fight. You just do it – it’s not the challenge, it’s how you handle it. There are always challenges.
- “The past should be a loose fitted garment that should easily be able to be taken off”
- We have free will and Choice. Redefine yourself
- You always need someone to drive a little knife in you so you can see the full potential of what you can become.
- Everyday is about how you can be better. Just keep choosing yourself. You have to nurture yourself. If you constantly give to others you have to teach yourself to give to yourself as well.
- All of this is about Shift. You need to visualize yourself of the person you want to be. The new and improved person. We are here to work on character – To mold and shape an artist. We’re here for transformation through process. We are here for transformation through process.
- When negative thoughts arise you say: “Cancel, Cancel”
- “Whatever you practice becomes your character and your character becomes your reality”

December 1st, 2005

- First section should feel like something is not right. Should feel edgy but vulnerable. You need to show your flaws. It is an introduction of character
- Second section is the work. You need to reveal a struggle. You should be uncomfortable in the space. The force needs to be with the space. You are fighting to get better. Admitting that it is you who needs to change and not everybody else.
- Third section is a transformation. It is a reinvention of self. Should see a security in dancing that the previous section lacked. Peacefulness with a secure edge.
- My character: Bipolar. Has an internal struggle but puts on an act for everybody. Refuses to show weaknesses.
- In rehearsal we worked on integrating character work through out each section.
- Today’s rehearsal felt wonderful. I actually experienced a journey.
- This whole experience is about building character. It is a transformation

- The discipline you do in class is the discipline you'll have for life.
- The way you work in the studios is how you will work in life. It will help you to stand up for yourself in certain situations so you're not walked all over.
- Marking is dancing at a level just below performance. Every physical movement you should be clear.

January 12th, 2006

- Keep the movement small right now. After a break you cannot expect to get your stamina back right away. You won't get your stamina back until you are on the stage. The dance is in very good shape, we just need to get it performance ready.
- The middle section carries the piece. It needs to be the section that you could scream in. we need to get dynamic feeling back. We need to see the conflict so the ending we can feel a resolution.
- You need to dance from real places. Let the music actually take you on a journey.
- This piece needs to be about communication. Look at each other.
- Work on details. Really use the transitions so you can emote and feel like your character.
- If it is real then there is no hurry
- Trying to nurture someone with issues slows your life down. If you love someone make sure its based on a solid foundation
- Life is going to have the up and downs and this work represent that. It has to show personal conflict. Allow yourself to have a personal experience so when you finish you won't know what happened.
- "Art" asks that of us – to go to a spot we don't normally go to. (Ex. Photographers take pictures of death)
- It is a commitment to let people know what the truth is.
- Need to learn what art is in the richest form.
- You need to do dances that challenge you. Push yourself to places that you have never been before
- This shouldn't be a pretend story that is meaningless. Need to understand that once you push past something totally new you will have enough energy to do it again.
- Energy comes from our mind. We control it.
- Free styling is an experience that can help your journey. If you go on a journey you become more aware of each other. You will have deeper connections on stage.
- If you don't do it full out (emotion) in the studio the stage your lungs will give out on you because you wont have had enough stamina.
- Let the passion uplift you.
- You need to be out of control first to be in control. Just need to let go and be the dancer. Get out of the person that you are.
- We can dance it less and have a bigger experience. Need to find the feeling
- You have to have the strength to identify the conflict and the truth

Personal Goal:

- Good but don't go through the experience. Feel the experience. Be fast but be calm when you do it.

January 15th, 2006

- Broke down the meaning of warm up. Specifically, tondu, degage, plie
- Warm up is about process. You should remember the pole metaphor. Lengthening and growing even when you are sinking are balancing.
- Four stages of a development (mind, to body, to core, to floor, work = a connection
- Staying alive
- We as dancers have to demand more of ourselves to grow 'in class, at home, in life"

Show Time

- I was afraid that I was not going to be in the proper mind set after dancing the tap piece, however, I think my quick change helped add to my performance. Being rushed and flustered contributed to the spastic movements my character does through out the work. I haven't been feeling well all week and I was really nervous to perform this dance. It is an emotional journey that is very technical. I had a wonderful experience on stage. I felt the energy of my cast mates and felt as though I sent the audience a subliminal message. I have never performed like this before and it is a very rewarding experience.

Journal Entries: Urban Lullaby, Holly Johnston

Audition

Holly's audition was interesting. There were about 20 to 25 people all very eager to work. We did some phrase work in the center but mostly went across the floor. Even though I have been in her class for now almost three years I still was somewhat nervous. I did not know what to expect and I was anxious. Watching the new people and the underclassman trying to pick up her movement I was very inspired. We go to a great school where we can all be so encouraging.

September 14th, 2005

Holly started by giving us fifteen minutes to warm ourselves up. I have to say that the vibe amongst the cast is wonderful. Everybody is so pumped and excited it just gave the room a great feel. Holly then taught us a phrase, quite quickly, and broke us down into small groups. She then selected random dancers to perform the phrase together or execute the movement by themselves. Holly asked me to perform it by myself. It felt wonderful. I felt very free, it was exhilarating. After dancing the phrase for awhile we took a small water break. When we continued again, we started doing a phrase we did in class the day before. We had to teach Evan and Rachel, who are not in the class. Shortly after, we did the phrase in groups and then Holly took the material and manipulated it. She augmented certain sections thus increasing the level of difficulty and surprised us by changing the facings of the movement. Through out the rehearsal Holly kept cracking jokes and the environment felt very comfortable. We had another break and when we came back she played with some staging ideas. We all start on the ground grabbing our left knee as resistance while Shawn and Arletta start to dance. Holly then played around with the idea of doing one of the phrases in the dark...complete dark. She split us up in two groups and had us do the phrase with all the lights off. It was scary because you really couldn't see anything; you just had to sense the people you were dancing with. She explained her idea of wanting dancers in the dark and then one or two dancers in light dancing to the noises the dancers in the dark were creating. Her concept was that the dancers in the dark would do quicker movements while the dancers in the light would have slower movements. She played with the idea of four in the dark, Shawn and Arletta in the light. Holly enjoyed just having Katie and I make music for Shawn. It was an interesting concept but since I have been fortunate enough to work with her in the past I don't believe this idea will actually be in the final cut. We ended class with her praising us. She is always very encouraging and supportive, however, every year I have had the experience that the first couple rehearsals I always feel discouraged, like a bad dancer. I am just too hard on myself and know that it is just the beginning and I have to change my attitude about myself or I will suffer in the weeks to come. I really enjoy doing her movement. It is a challenge for my nervous system to let go and dive into the scary terrain, thus causing me to be in constant competition with myself to release more and go deeper. I take pleasure in challenges though.

September 21, 2005

Rehearsal started at 6.30 because Holly gave us some time to stretch. We started by reviewing the two phrases we did the week before. She then split us up into groups and watched us perform. I felt very on my game tonight and I was able to execute each movement with ease but strength. Holly looked at me in wonder and told me that I was on fire. After we did the faster phrase a couple more times Holly then asked us to retrograde it. We all kind of paired up and tried to figure it out. She gave us time and suggested ideas to us when we were stuck how to retrograde a fall. There was lots of laughter but it was fun and we were working hard. After experimenting with the retrograde and performing that phrase in groups, we took a short break. When Holly came back she taught us a new phrase. She put us in pairs and then worked with me for a short while trying to figure out just how to make it into a duet. There was much trial and error, it was entertaining. After we worked out all the kinks we tried with our partners. Arletta is my partner. We did the partner phrase in two groups and then Letta and I did it by ourselves. (Holly wanted the rest of the cast to see our timing). She then started to structure again. Arletta and I start out on the stage and then are joined by Rachel and Katie. We leave and the boys enter. The last two years I have worked with Holly I was always the last one to be brought on to the stage (at the beginning process)...so it definitely interesting to be considered two weeks in a row for movement at the beginning. I was watching the faces of Diana and Lorene who were the epitome of depression. I talked with them after class and told them they are beautiful and this is just Holly' way of choreographing. I wanted them to understand that the dance wouldn't end being any thing that she structured tonight. However, I felt sad for them because I remember when I was there. I had the same look of wanting on my face. Overall it was a good rehearsal and we got a lot done.

September 28th , 2005

Rehearsal went well. Sarah Kay started out by helping us review the duet phrase that we learned last week. After we went over the duet phrase Holly then wanted to see the faster paced phrase. We demonstrated in groups. Holly then taught us her solo which she performed the week before. She taught very fast and I felt very overwhelmed. I am constantly trying to stay at Arletta's level of learning but I often feel like a beginner around her. It is good though because she helps me to constantly keep pushing myself to grow. Holly split us up in groups and we performed what we knew. I was quite impressed with myself because I knew more than I thought. I was able to get through the entire work. Holly took a break and the dancers reviewed more slowly the phrase. When she returned she chose Diana, Lorene, Katie, and Rachel to perform the higher terrain phrase. She spaced them accordingly and told them they would be dancing in the dark while making music with there bodies. Her goal was to hear the breath, the falls, the squeaks...she is very intrigued by the music dancers can make. Her idea is that they would do the phrase in the dark, lights come up to reveal Arletta and I upstage left doing very subtle movements from the duet phrase. Lights go out and the four girls dance a segment of there dance in the dark again. Lights come up to reveal Shawn and Evan doing the duet phrase. Holly was on a roll and just kept working. She worked with the men for awhile trying to enhance certain movements and fix some transitions. It was a

very interesting process to watch because in that short time I immediately saw growth from both men on how they executed the movement. Shawn and Evan end on the floor and Arletta and I walk on, stand behind them, and then collapse into them as the lights go out. We then proceeded with a section from Holly's solo. Her idea is have the lower level of the stage lit at this part...so we had to diminish all the movements to the lower level without losing any of the energy. I think her thought process was really focused today because we did accomplish a lot. When I first walked into rehearsal I noticed the energy was extremely low, everybody was really tired. However, when we were learning her solo phrase Holly put on the music: "I am everyday people". I observed that the energy from the music picked up everybody's spirits and the cast suddenly seemed more alive in their bodies. Overall I felt our rehearsal was very productive and surprisingly enough we got a lot accomplished. I wonder how much of it we'll keep next week?

October 5th, 2005

Rehearsal went well today, we seemed to get quite a lot achieved. Even though she did not keep any of the structure she had created last week. First, Holly had us explore movement on the ground...mostly on our knees and feet in a squat position. We played around improving with that idea for awhile, which I discovered was extremely hard for me not to keep repeating myself. I had to stay focused internally and explore to keep pushing myself not to do what is expected. Shortly after, Holly taught us another phrase, (in her rehearsal/class you have to be able to learn quickly because she just keeps going) which we then broke into groups and performed it. It had a lot of arm/hand gesture and much internal very organic movement. We then took a break and of course we all went over it. Holly came back into the room and started to play around with structuring what we had done. She kept the same beginning with dancers in the dark and Letta and me in the corner. She then had Shawn, Katie, and Diana perform a part of the phrase we had just been taught across the floor. After, Rachel and Arletta entered executing a phrase from last week but spicing it up a bit with some jumps and more drastic terrain. (a lot more off center work) Followed by me, Evan, and Lorene doing the entire phrase we had just learned. After experimenting with this idea for awhile we took a break. Holly then came back and basically started over. She kept the dancers in the dark but added Evan and took out Katie. Holly's new idea is that the lights come up to reveal Katie and Arletta in the corner doing a piece of the phrase we had learned earlier. All the lights come up and Diana, Shawn, and I do the phrase across the floor (I took Katie's position). She cut our phrase slightly and then added Rachel, Lorene, and Evan to come up after our phrase. Here she started experimenting with some partnering ideas. Evan was my partner, we work well together. We were experimenting with hinges and falling, it was fun. There is the one move that only Evan can seem to do. He is on his stomach and our sacrum's are touching. He has to sit up in a dogging position but as he comes up he contracts launching me forward. It was like a roller coaster ride, it was so much fun. The last time he did it I think I got air born. We spent a little while trying to teach the other partners what to do. After the launch Katie and Arletta come from upstage right and start repeating their phrase, while Shawn and I do a little bit of choreography leaving the stage, Same as Rachel and Evan. Lorene and Diana stay on the floor but do a very interesting scoot forward, while one is on top of the other. It was a very interesting sequence of events but I found the movement enjoyable to perform. I also discovered

where there were parts of choreography were I could experiment and make it something bigger. I have to know where my boundaries are so as not to step on a choreographer's toes. Holly's rehearsal is always a very fun but a hard working rehearsal. I find it a little bit frustrating because it takes us awhile to get any sort of dance but at least the process has continually remained interesting.

October 12th, 2005

Rehearsal was canceled do to LAB's performance

I thought holly's movement quality was really nice. She had some great moments. I thought the lighting design at the beginning was way cool and it was also great to have because I was able to look at the shadows rather than the distraction with the lack of costume. I thought the 28 minute work at the end was great. (Did not seem that long). However, once again the lack of costume was really unnecessary. I thought the choice Letta made wasn't the right one because it thru the meaning of the work off, for me. It wasn't till the end when Jeremy Hale took off his shirt that it was all supposed to make sense, it was the last layer. She had her top off for a good portion when the rest still had layers to go. I was confused, however, all the dancers performed beautifully.

October 19th, 2005

Tonight's rehearsal we concentrated on partner work. We learned a duet that Arletta did in LAB. It was my favorite part of the piece because it was so beautifully organized and structured that it was smooth and almost romantic. My partner was Evan. Evan is a great dancer but I observed that he tends to let fear get in the way sometimes instead of taking risks. I only notice this because I did the same thing my sophomore year. Evan and I were a little slow at getting the phrase comfortably in our bodies but after lots of practice I know we could get it. The structure that we came up with two weeks ago we once again tossed aside for now. However, I really do like the partner work, I just hope that Evan and I can get it as smooth as Letta and Shawn. It's a different feeling being the veteran in a piece and working with people who not only are underclassmen but also have never done this style before. I enjoy helping them and giving them advice that I was never told about. It's nice to be able to break down a step and assist them when maybe Holly doesn't have time to do. Holly really emphasized how we need to just dive into the work and make a commitment to it because if we don't we wont be able to fully execute the movement like we are supposed to. It also makes it more difficult when doing partner work. Staying in your comfort zone can be really dangerous and uninteresting.

October 26th, 2005

Rehearsal was horrible tonight. Holly had a very strange energy that lingered in the room, taking over everybody's energy. Shawn couldn't come tonight so Evan really had to step up to the plate and remember everything they had done as the base partner the week before. Even can get something it just takes him a little bit longer than the rest. Anyway, we reviewed everything we did last week and tried to play around with the choreography but everything we did just didn't seem to work. Holly had an idea that we did not understand which led her into a state of frustration. We worked on partnering for awhile but we were unsuccessful in some of Holly's idea. I personally was not happy with the way rehearsal went because I felt like Holly wanted to give up in a sense. I felt like she thought we were horrible. I also do not like our dance right now. We repeat way

too much choreography that it just appears that we didn't do much at all. I have faith in Holly though that the piece will be incredible I just can't wait till then.

November 16th, 2005

Rehearsal has been very frustrating. Evan and I cannot seem to make any of the partner work smooth. I feel terrible because I wish there was something I could do to make him not so afraid. He is holding back which makes our transitions very rough. I understand where he is coming from because I was him my sophomore year in Holly's work. I was brand new to the work as well, and was overwhelmed on some days. We are partners and I wouldn't want to work with any other person. He is an amazing dancer; he just needs to find some confidence.

November 30th, 2005

I'm starting to wonder how we will ever finish this choreography. I have total faith in Holly however; winter break is coming and then pretty much it is the show. I feel the vibe amongst the cast is tired and anxious. This cast is wonderful but they are not as quick as Holly's previous casts. When Holly would want us to try something we rarely get it right away but we were all confident that we could achieve what she was asking. This year the majority of her cast has either never worked with her before or has only taken Friday workshop. Everyone is still a little hesitant to jump into the movement, which I think might be getting to Holly because we can't achieve any of the ideas that she is asking for. It makes the creative process very limited

December 14th, 2006

We had rehearsals during finals week to help pick up the energy of the work. It felt really good to dance during this week. We worked on different partner movements and finished the work. I think her idea is to go from total chaos to stillness. It's interesting we just have to succeed on smoother transitions.

January 11, 2006

Today we taught Marissa Lorene's part in the dance. The group pulled together and had a great dynamic in teaching and helping each other. Evan looks amazing. He came back from vacation with a fire in him that has changed his movement and performance quality. I can't take my eyes off of him when he takes the space. I am so proud of him. Marissa was also truly inspiring with her attitude toward the work and how quickly she was able to pick up the choreography. I have total faith that she will remember everything and look great next week at tech rehearsal. I feel that even though Holly just finished the work, this cast will pull it together.

January 17th, 2006

Tech rehearsal went fairly smooth. Marissa surprised at all with her amazing capabilities. The cast seemed to me in some moments that we were a professional company. Everybody created a great dynamic and we were a family. I have observed just from being in the concert the last four years that Tech doesn't always go very well, which I guess is a good thing. It means that we will have an amazing show.

January 24th, 2006

I was very nervous to perform any of the duet phrases I have with Evan in the show because we weren't too successful at tech rehearsal. We started a ritual of going over one move in particular to help warm us up. Much to my chagrin Evan and I nailed everything in the dance. Evan partnered me with such certainty that there was no point in being nervous, he had it under control. The performance aspect wasn't too different from what I was doing in rehearsal. When I was in rehearsal and I was performing my solo in the work, I knew the rest of the cast was watching so I would try and out do myself and jump higher or turn longer. I found myself repeating this method in front of the audience but through out the whole dance, not just my solo. I had an adrenaline rush and I had energy pouring out of every inch of my body. I felt like a superhero. It was a gratifying experience to be on that stage and feel the energy from my cast and offer the audience a small taste of what we were feeling. It is this overwhelming feeling of complete joy that I wish I could bottle up and have for always.

Contemporary Companies



Dancing is a very living art.
It is essentially of the moment, although a very old art.
A dancer's art is lived while he is dancing.
Nothing is left of his art except the pictures and the memories—
when his dancing days are over.
What he has to contribute to the sum total of human experience
must be done through the dance.
It cannot be transmitted at any other time,
in any other way.
Martha Graham



Battleworks is a company of eight dancers that offers a wide variety of performance and residency activities. Company members teach in many styles including modern techniques, ballet, jazz, composition, repertory, improvisation, yoga, and pilates. Although the company's teaching is focused toward the dance professional, company members are skilled and experienced at teaching all levels and ages from children to senior adult.

Artistic Director: Robert Battle

Battleworks Dance Company

PO Box 16

New York, NY 10012

(347)329-5526 phone

info@battleworksdance.com



R.A.W. (Reality at Work)



Mia Michaels R.A.W., has toured in Korea, in Amsterdam at the International Dance Festival, had their NYC concert in '99 and toured Europe in 2001. The dancers are beautifully attuned to the demands that Michaels places on them. Stamina is taken for granted, but beyond that, "being there"-in the sense of exuding a vivid presence even when not moving-is required.

Contact:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]



The Savage Jazz Dance Company

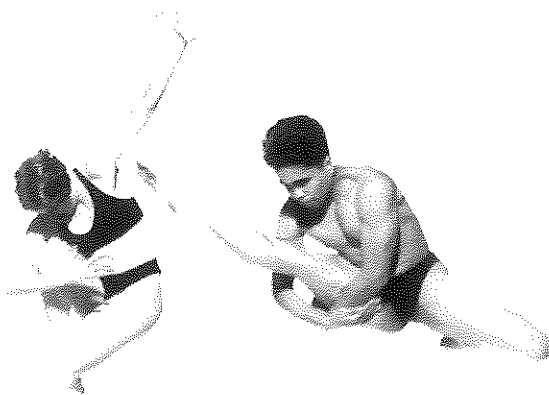


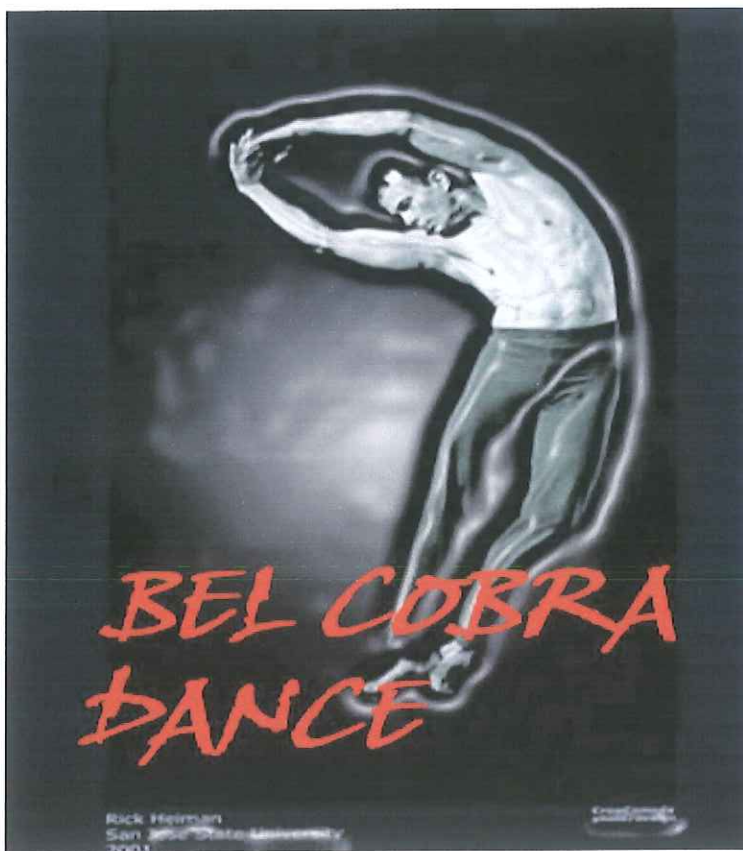
SAVAGE JAZZ DANCE COMPANY is dedicated to exploring through dance the beauty and complexity of jazz music -the authentic American form. “.it may be the most layered, sophisticated concert jazz dance company in these Western climes,” said K.C Patrick of Dance Magazine.

Founded in 1992 by Artistic Director, Reginald Ray-Savage, Savage Jazz Dance Company is a convergence of artistic forces, where the energy, improvisation, and syncopation of jazz is expressed through athletic, lyrical, and explosive dance. The only all-jazz concert dance company in Northern California (and one of the few in the US!), Savage Jazz’s repertory includes works to the music of such jazz legends as Miles Davis, Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, and Charles Mingus, as well as some of the country’s best contemporary jazz composers, including long time collaborator and award-winning jazz bassist, Marcus Shelby. Savage Jazz Dance Company combines the fundamental movement vocabulary of contemporary dance, jazz dance, Dunham technique, and ballet to draw out the complexity of jazz

Contact:

530 East Eighth St. #202
Oakland, CA. 94606
510-496-6068





Bel Cobra Dance Company
Hollywood and Los Angeles, California

Available worldwide...
for fusion lyrical jazz dance, belly dance, and Latin dance

Contact:
info@belcobradance.com
323-377-9397.

EVOLUTION

Contemporary Dance with a Commercial Edge



Evolution is a company of 15 dancers that includes the winner of Fox's hot new reality series "So You Think You Can Dance," Nick Lazzarini, and runner up Melody Lacayanga. The company has worked with some of Los Angeles and New York's hottest choreographers, Liz Imperio, Dee Caspary, Justin Giles and Jason Parsons, amongst many others.

Visual Rhythm

a young theatrical jazz dance company that uses dance and music ...

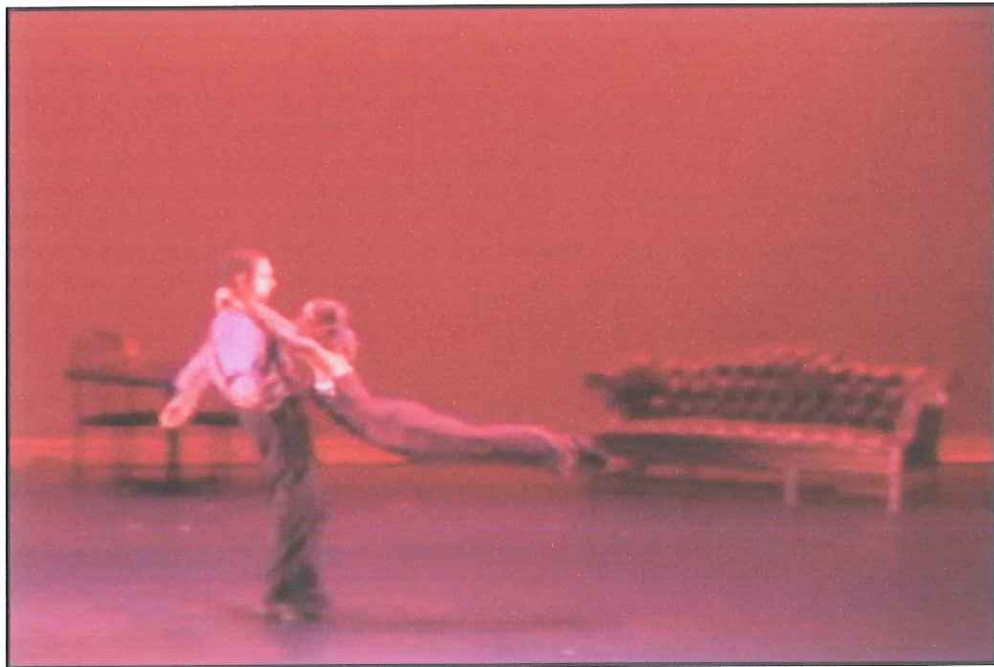
...to bring drama to life. Visual Rhythm maintains its fresh and innovative approach to contemporary jazz dance by staying close to the street and presenting works that are relevant for audiences who also enjoy hip-hop, MTV, poetry slams and other art forms that speak to a youthful, urban, global culture.

Visual Rhythm Dance Company

19 N. Second Street

Suite 102

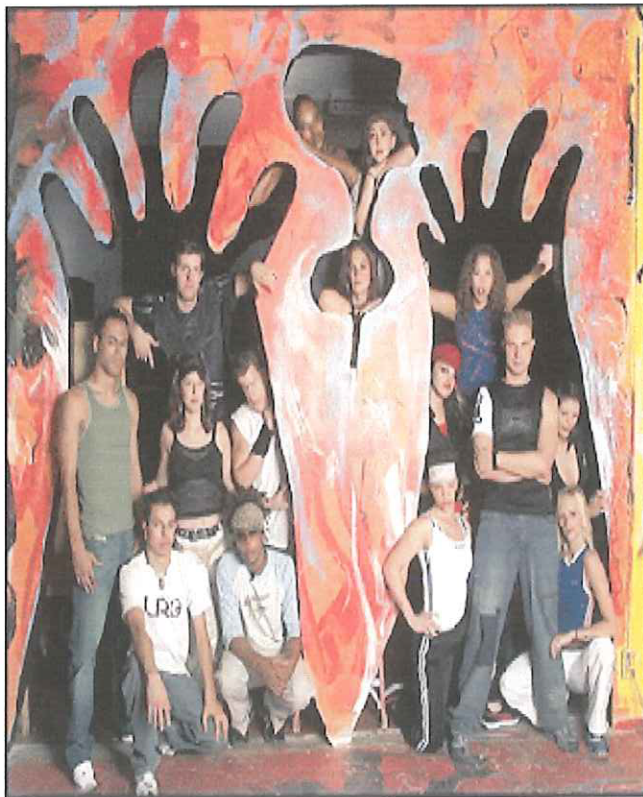
San Jose, CA 95113



Nebellen

An exciting experiment in dance fusion, Nebellen, a non-profit dance company, was formed in Phoenix where it can't get much hotter! Blurring the lines between high art and pop culture Nebellen brings a unique blend of raw movement and passion to their shows. Fierce, athletic, energetic, and provocative only begins to describe this ethnically diverse group of performers.

Nebellen dancers arouse the audience by wedding cutting edge dance styles like house, hip-hop, martial arts, liquid, break dancing (b-boying) and poppin' with the control of more established dance forms. Nebellen is truly an American grown art form blending not only various dance styles, but spoken word, and live DJing. Nebellen's "Mixer Show" is a fully developed stage show with music varying in genre from classical to hip hop, dazzling glow in the dark spectacles, and a little bit of everything for all ages to enjoy.



Contact:

Ellen Rath



nebellen@hotmail.com

JUMP RHYTHM JAZZ PROJECT

...is a company of rhythmically exuberant, emotion-driven dancers that performs and teaches nationally and internationally.

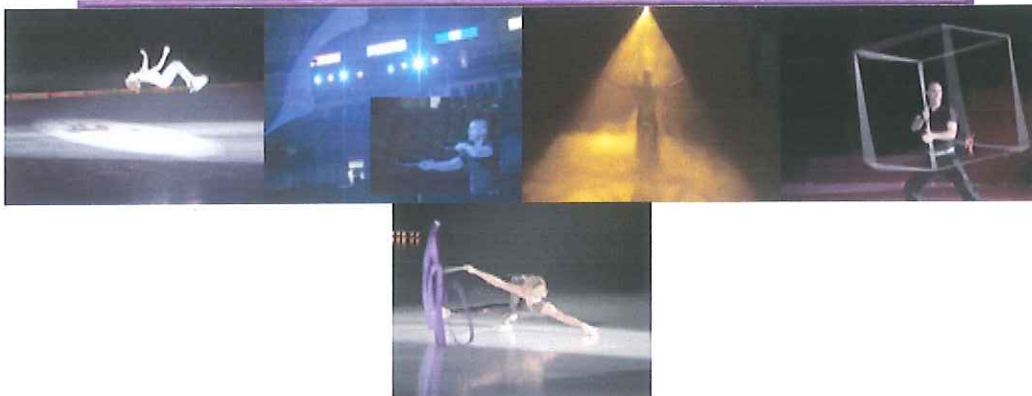
JRJP was founded in 1990 in New York City by Billy Siegenfeld. In its first years, the company focused on the following projects: touring *Romance in Swingtime*, the chamber jazz musical featuring Billy Siegenfeld and his longtime associate Jeannie Hill; presenting the duo in jazz-tap teaching workshops; and sponsoring Siegenfeld in choreographic residencies with both professional and university companies. While touring *Romance*, dancers, educators and critics became aware of Siegenfeld and Hill's fresh take on the tradition of American rhythm dancing (*Dance Magazine* cited them as "a delightful latter-day Fred and Ginger"), and credited Siegenfeld with generating a style of dance built upon the rhythmic and dynamic foundations of swinging jazz music. This style is formalized and taught in Chicago and on tour as the Jump Rhythm Jazz Technique. In the fall of 1997, following years of choreographing on commission or on pick-up companies, Siegenfeld decided to organize JRJP into an ensemble of eight dancers to train in the technique and rehearse repertory and new works on a regular basis.



Aerial Experience Productions



...The flight of a dream

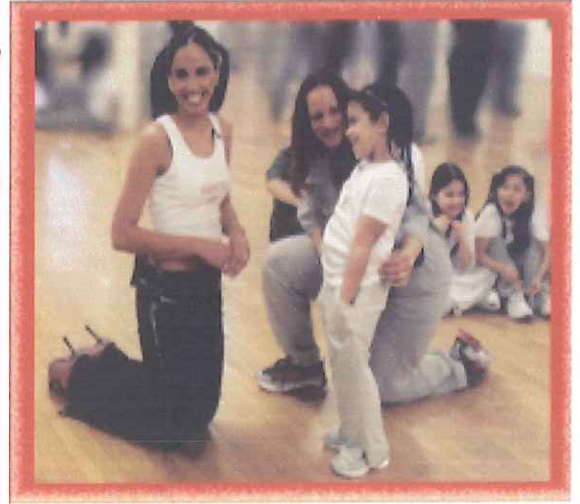


Aerial Experience Productions is a premier provider of elite acrobatic entertainment to gala events and television productions around the world. From movie premiers and product launches to corporate conferences and conventions...from major sporting events and music concerts to tradeshow and television commercials...

Keep Rising To The Top

Champions are not those who never fail, they are those who never quit."

Keep Rising To The Top's (KR3TS) mission is to broaden the notion of what a dancer is and promotes the preservation of ethnic and cultural dances. Based in Spanish Harlem, KR3TS fulfills a need in the community to provide a positive alternative to social and street pressures by providing dance classes and support programs in a non-discriminating atmosphere. KR3TS also carries out its mission through its core-performance group that fosters pre-professional dancers.



KR3TS Dance Company caters to children, young adults of lower to middle income families in Latino communities of New York City primarily. The company also opens its doors to any other community. Their goal is to provide an outlet to develop skills and abilities that will enhance their lifestyles.

SEROS DANCE

Artistic Director

Joshua Carlson

Encountering passion and mortality, the forbidden and fearful become beloved and sublime and carnal athleticism can overtake balletic grace. The icons of our waking life invade our dreams. We break from sleep laughing or sweating or mumbling a desire for a connection, for understanding, for something beyond beds, bars, bank statements and boredom. Melding circus strength, super-human power and classical dance, SEROS creates intense, joyous works that eclipse the simple boundaries of sensuality. Dancers offend gravity, wrestle the texture of space, and fool time applying obsessive technique, harmonic partnering and rippling physicality. Bodies do things you did not think were possible, or natural, or moral.

For audition information, please contact the company manager at info@SEROSdance.org.



Contact:

**685 Academy Street, No. 28
New York, New York 10034
917-723-0454
Info@SEROSdance.org**

Class Analysis



The ability to be open,
to give the audience a glimpse of your specialness
comes naturally to some.
It can also be conveyed through the love of what you are doing.
If you love to dance, you are "touched" when you dance.
If you do not lose this onstage,
you are on your way to teaching the audience.
Eric Franklin

Fundamentals of Dance Comp I

Explored ways to generate energy and connections between individuals.

Learned to take artistic inspiration from outside sources such as visual art and literature.

Worked with another dancer in a creative process to create choreography for a duet.

Collaborated in groups to find solutions to movement based problems; discovered how to include many dancers in finding the function of a metaphorical object.

Learned the difference between far and near kinesphere and how movement within each communicates various ideas.

Understood the meaning of positive and negative space and how to incorporate the idea into the body.

Built a more comprehensive dance vocabulary while developing the ability to verbally and academically communicate about dance and dancers.

Formed a critical eye for observing and composing movement.

Learned how to receive and apply constructive criticism from teachers and peers.

Moved in an improvised atmosphere.

Fund of Dance Comp II

Performed Deborah Haye's "Exit" and discussed what could be learned from that experience; discovered how it affects people as performers, dancers and humans.

Worked in groups to further our understanding of choreography and ensemble work.

Experienced professional dance through video media, and received several opportunities to reflect and expound our thoughts in written form.

Used objects and props to aid in the choreographic process.

Developed a portfolio which included pictures, articles, journals and other symbols reflecting our ideas and thoughts on dance.

Laban Movement Analysis

Learned about the connection between movement and the mental and physical development of an infant through childhood.

Read about the history of Rudolf Laban and his contemporary Bartinieff and how they developed Laban Movement Analysis and Laban Notation methodology.

Explored the complex world of mind-body centering and learned how our mental experiences can translate to a physical realm.

Learned about total body organization including breath, upper lower, head tail, body half and cross lateral movement.

Discovered the greater idea of effort by studying the varying aspects of time, weight, flow and space (indirect/direct)

Learned the shapes: wall, pin, triangle, ball, spiral and the modes of shape change.

Discussed in depth the facets of space including but not limited to pathways, kinesphere, positive and negative, arching, carving and spoking.

Learned how the body can utilize and manipulate space to its advantage.

The Class culminated in an in-depth analysis of movement in different forms of media such as television, movies, sports and other elements of popular culture. This included how different movement qualities and physical signatures revealed different themes and characteristics (often socially constructed ideas).

Dance Styles and Forms

Learned how to bring choreography out of the studio and place it in certain environments that either limited or further enabled the physicality of the movement and creative process.

Explored the effects of choreographic devices, including augmentation, diminution, transposition and retrograde, amongst others.

Revisited Laban ideas and concepts and how they play a part in the aesthetic of certain dance styles.

Worked with partners to develop movement studies set to music. This helped to enlighten us to the complexity of the music/dance relationship.

Worked with all that was included in the semester to build a solo study as a comprehensive final.

Experienced lectures demonstrations from multiple artists and choreographers in the greater Los Angeles community.

Drumming for Dance

Currently learning drumming techniques and rhythms; finding out how many different rhythms work together.

While exploring rhythm we are also exercising our minds by retaining rhythmic information.

Learning to incorporate our knowledge of rhythm into our technique classes; improving the musicality of our movement.

Learning traditional chants and drumming from different parts of the world.

To Dance is Human

Explored our own culture through pondering what it is that has helped to form our personality and disposition.

This was achieved by thinking about stories and traditions from our family and personal life.

Created a basket containing artifacts and symbols representative of our personal life and passions; a reflection of self.

Participated in story telling that helped to enlighten the class about our personal point of view.

Completed a field visit along with analysis about what was communicated culturally, sexually (pertaining to gender) and socially through the movement.

Learned how to read and respond to dance and articles about how dance reflects culture.

Developed a personal view of what dance means and how it has affected our lives.

Explored how dance from all around the country is affected by world cultures and in turn how cultural values are exposed through dance and movement.

Came to understand how important story telling is in dance and vice versa.

Dance History

Studied the foundations and evolution of Ballet from its origin in the 15th century French Courts through romantic and classical ballet to its more contemporary disciplines.

Learned how modern technique originated and developed as a revolution against ballet and what it represented physically and socially; also understood how different modern technique grew out of each other and how some drew from ballet as their foundation.

Attended a live performance and wrote a short critique on what we observed.

Had the opportunity to watch and discuss multiple videos on dance and dancing
Read various articles on dance and how it has evolved and grown through its history including an article discussing the ethnic background of ballet which is usually perceived as an elitist dance form unassociated with any particular culture or ethnicity.

Looked at dance as an ethnic and cultural experience.

Developed our critical eye for movement by writing a final paper that illustrated how dance and movement can be used (either symbolically or literally) in film to reveal theme and meaning.

Kinesiology I

Researched and learned about the body on a cellular level.

Studied the many systems of the body including muscular, respiratory, circulatory, skeletal and nervous systems; also learned how all these systems affect each other and function together to make the body a well-oiled and sophisticated machine.

Gained an understanding of how the body can and should work more efficiently with respect to dance, health and longevity.

Wolf's Law: Form follows function

Kinesiology II

Took the major theoretical concepts that we learned in Kinesiology I and took them into the studio applying them in a physical setting.

Focused on individual joints and strongholds of the body and studied the ideal function to see how they can affect posture, alignment and other areas of the body whether proximal or otherwise.

Learned about bone rhythms and the opposing forces that exist in the body to create balance and expansion.

Principles of Teaching

Learned about the seven multiple intelligences and how to incorporate it into the curriculum for students.

Explored and developed teaching styles and techniques through in-class workshops.

Learned how to format a lesson plan and include cognitive, psychomotor, and effective methods of learning.

Discussed ways in which to introduce dance and movement concepts into the academic classroom.

Experienced and discussed the various ways in which music can enhance and limit music.

Learned the educational requirements for grades K-12 and how to adhere to the California standards in the lesson plan.

Ballet

Worked to utilize the core to create length, stability, and flexibility.

Used the floor as a spring board to roll/ work through the metatarsals.

Applied the concept of opposition: For example, lifting up in a plie and pushing down in a releve.

Worked to achieve rotation by activating the inner thighs and spiraling to the greater trochanter, rather than rotating from the knees or the ankles.

Learned to expand the sternum and sliding the scapula into the back so your arms have a support system.

Recognized proper placement through core activation, by envisioning your belly button to your spine.

Used the concept of imagery to further develop our technique.

Developed our ability for difficult enchainements to further improve our technique.

Expanded our technical ballet vocabulary.

Worked on musicality for various phrase work and movement (including proper accent and energy).

Pointe & Variations

Acquired muscle control and ankle strength when dancing sur la pointe.

Worked on increasing confidence and dancing with out fear when faced with personal challenges and goals.

Developed the ability to dance on pointe with ease and grace, while maintaining proper alignment.

Learned both contemporary and classical variations.

Recognized the difference between healthy rigor and over excursion.

Modern Dance

Used knowledge of dance fundamentals into a more confident investigation of different vocabularies and approaches to Modern Dance.

Discovered how to create a strong versatile range of motion.

Experimented with improvisation as a soloist and as an ensemble.

Explored off center pathways, joint articulation, and athleticism.

Developed the ability to trust ourselves with movement vocabulary.

Learned how to create accents and dynamics with in our bodies.

Worked on how to respond organically rather than manufacture movement.

Used our artistic curiosity to experience risk and growth.

Discovered how to learn, transpose, and retrograde movement phrases easily and clearly.

Explored contact improv and trusting oneself when working with a partner.

Familiarized ourselves when inverting the body.

Yoga

Demonstrated physical efficiency in postures: developed the ability to maintain steady flow of breath.

Executed inverted postures for upper body strength.

Executed seated and bending postures to promote flexibility and strength.

Identified which muscle groups were active during asanas.

Developed a sensitivity to our body's balance and well being.

Learned to become an autonomous practitioner and integrate asanas in our own stretching, conditioning and rehabilitation.

Tap

Explored different rhythms in swing, blues, new age and funk.

Learned about tap legends and how they contributed to the world of tap.

Demonstrated movement vocabulary while experimenting with the idea of improv.

Learned how to count quarter, eighth and sixteenth notes in 4/4 time.

Acquired a basic understanding of tap rudiments and how to organize them into a phrase.

Explored the concept of listening.

Discovered a basic understanding of how tap relates to music.

Jazz

Expanded our knowledge of various jazz styles in the commercial field.

Built stamina, strength, flexibility, and confidence in performing jazz technique.

Learned the responsibilities of being a professional dancer, which involves the audition process and techniques, attitude, and rehearsal etiquette.

Explored different performance qualities with in each style.

Developed an understanding of musicality in jazz movement.

Progressed in technical execution of advanced movement.

Explored the idea of when to be a soloist and when to be an ensemble dancer.

Heightened our knowledge of movement by having a willingness to take risks and expand beyond our kinesphere.

To perform is to communicate with the soul. It is being in tune with your body and allowing yourself to move accordingly. You have to take experience, risk, and confidence to grow into clarity as a performer. With each performance you gain more knowledge about yourself and about who you are as an artist. To express oneself there are no boundaries. Performance quality is obtainable if you allow yourself to engage fully with the work. It is the artist's responsibility to transcend a choreographer's intention and relate that message to the audience. Performance requires a transition of self from the inside out, to reveal your identity.

While all performance arts have been designed previous to their showing it is only in the performance that they attain their being. Performances are never twice the same; for these are live presentations and the performers are human beings with all of their idiosyncrasies...it is this doing that is the mark of a performing art. The thing planned must be embodied, and this happens in the act of doing. The musical score, the notated dance, and the words of the drama are only blueprints or directions for the important event...the audience and the performers must have personal contact. And while the performers may hope to duplicate or improve on another occasion, for now that's it. You can only enjoy Merce Cunningham when he himself performs in your presence. (Ellefeldt 185-186)